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ABSTRACT

A project to provide technical assistance to staffs of two demonstration programs for preschool handicapped children and their families is described. The focus was technical assistance developed and exercised by the Technical Assistance Development System (TADS), which assisted in the development of the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program. After providing an overview of the TADS, the selection of the case study sites, and the staff involved in technical assistance, attention is directed to implementation (i.e., procedures and activities of technical assistance coordination). Since the focus of the report is to describe the technical assistance interaction between the provider organization and the client organization, a narrative account is presented of the dynamics that occurred during specific stages/events of the process among specific staff members. These accounts for both demonstration programs (called Project Early Start and Project Co-op) each involve 20 to 25 staff (e.g., teaching staff, therapists, technical assistance coordinators, evaluation specialists). The results, which are discussed in terms of the overall projects, administration, and staff, center on the following concerns: client and provider characteristics affecting technical assistance, characteristics of the technical assistance events that are significant in themselves, and outcomes of technical assistance. (SEW)

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A Case Study of Technical Assistance to Demonstration Programs for Young Handicapped Children

Part II

by
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A CASE STUDY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
TO DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS FOR
YOUNG HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

PART II

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September 1982

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This second year of the case study demonstrates to us, once again, that such endeavors require a great deal of time and effort on the part of many people. We feel particularly fortunate and appreciative again this year that so many people gave so much to produce the information contained in this report.

The report reflects the professionalism and cooperation of the TADS staff, the case study observers, the technical assistance providers, and the administrators and staff members from each project site. Again, we have seen that it is not easy to be observed as one goes about his professional daily business. It is sometimes even more difficult to have the results of that observation reported in black and white, through the writing skills, insight, and keen eyes of the two observers. All persons involved at the projects approached the case study with enthusiasm, gave us feedback on our work, and were a genuine delight to work with. We especially appreciate the cooperation and time that "Harry Newman" and "Linda Voland" gave to this effort. All members of the TADS staff deserve our thanks. They continued to support this endeavor with their involvement, their energy, and their patience. Particular thanks go to "Carol Turner" and "Bob Mitchell," the technical assistance coordinators for each case study project. They experienced the most intense scrutiny of the observers in this second year. Their continued support for the case, while being included in it, demonstrated their professionalism and encouraged more introspection by all of us.

We have been most fortunate to have the assistance of Pat Eichman and Joan O'Brien in the production of the report. They are true professionals, and contributed a great deal to the report's quality and readability.

Thanks to one and all.

Shirley Behr
John Hawes

September 1982

Pat Vandiviere
Tanya M. Suarez

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

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In the following pages, the authors of this report have attempted to describe the development, conduct, and results of the second year of a three-year case study of the technical assistance process. The focus of the study was technical assistance as it is developed and exercised by the Technical Assistance Development System (TADS) and provided to the staffs of two demonstration programs for preschool handicapped children and their families.

The purpose of the case study effort is to understand better the complex nature of technical assistance and to identify additional factors that influence its success. In addition, the study is being used to explore further the feasibility of the case study approach as a method for gathering such information.

The case study results for the second year of the effort are provided in the remainder of this report. Specifically, the report contains:

1. a description of the context in which the study took place and the sites and persons who were involved (Section II)
2. a brief description of the development of the conceptual framework for the study and a delineation of modifications for this year (Section III)
3. the two case reports (Section IV)
4. a discussion of the findings or "learnings" from the cases and from the conduct of the study, accompanied by suggestions for future efforts (Section V)

SECTION II

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AND PERSONS INVOLVED

The context in which the study was conducted includes the technical assistance system (TADS) and its procedures, and the two selected case study sites (Projects "Early Start" and "Co-Op"). The persons involved include the providers of TADS services, whether TADS staff members or external consultants; personnel at the two case study sites; the case study observers; and the members of the TADS staff.

The Technical Assistance System

The Technical Assistance Development System (TADS) was established in 1971 to assist in the development of the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP). Approved by Congress in 1968 and administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education (now Special Education Programs), HCEEP provides grants to public and private nonprofit agencies for the development and implementation of model programs to demonstrate high-quality services for young handicapped children and their families. TADS provides comprehensive and systematic support to HCEEP grantees through the delivery of informational and consultative services, called technical assistance.

Stedman (1976) described the technical assistance system as a communication network.

> Members initiate and maintain communication around specific problems and about strategies to solve the problems. . . . The structure and function of the system are partly determined by the content or information the system is appointed to deliver, partly by the characteristics of the "customers," or client organizations, and partly by the character and style of the technical assistance organization's membership. . . . The basic components of a TA system are . . . program planning and evaluation, information and media, organizational development, critical content areas, and resource development. (p. 3)

Lillie and Black (1976) extended this view. They described the

TADS system of technical assistance delivery as having five interlocking phases:

1. developing a program plan for each project
2. assessing needs of each project in relationship to its plan
3. developing a written agreement for technical assistance according to the project needs
4. delivering technical assistance through
    a. TADS-sponsored activities at the project site or in conference or workshop settings
    b. services to the project from the TADS office, or
    c. printed materials prepared by TADS
5. evaluating the effectiveness of the technical assistance

TADS now assists projects in managing their programs and accomplishing their goals more effectively through a broad range of systematic support and consultative services. Access to expertise not available locally, and to materials designed specifically for projects, is available through TADS. TADS also provides opportunities to increase collaboration and information-sharing among projects, and services are provided at no extra cost to projects. Project participation in technical assistance is encouraged but voluntary.

The Clients of the Technical Assistance System

The clients of TADS for this case study are three-year demonstration projects for preschool handicapped children and their families. The projects are a component of HCEEP and are funded and administered by the U.S. Special Education Programs.[1] Their purpose is to demonstrate and disseminate model services for preschool handicapped children and their families. Because the projects operate under legislation and regulations governing HCEEP, they are similar in their overall purpose and the major areas to which their staffs devote their energies; e.g., developing model services for children and their families, increasing staff skills, demonstrating the model to others, and disseminating information about their program. The projects differ in areas such as year of funding, setting for services, theoretical and philosophical bases for services, and type and age of child served.

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[1] The terms "Office of Special Education" and "Special Education Programs" are used interchangeably in the three case study reports. The agency name was changed during the development of the reports.

Selection of the Case Study Sites

It was recognized early in the planning that comprehensive observations and interviews with the selected projects would be essential in order to obtain adequate descriptions of the technical assistance process. Resources were available to include two sites in the study. A portrait was desired that would include the stages of the introduction of technical assistance to a project through the termination of technical assistance at the end of the project's HCEEP funding. Projects in their first year of operation were, therefore, selected at the outset. In addition, projects were selected to permit observation of at least some variation in the delivery of technical assistance. The criteria for selection, therefore, included such factors as noticeable differences in staff, target population, and administrative location and structure. Other criteria were the agreement of the project's administrator to serve as a case study site and location of the project where travel expenses could be kept to a minimum.

Because the purpose of the study was to describe the technical assistance process, and not the overall development of the client projects, the location and personnel of the projects were kept confidential. This stance was taken to protect the clients and to encourage their participation and information-sharing. It was also taken to limit biases in the interpretation of results which might occur if actual locations and participants were known. Precise descriptions of sites, created to disguise their location but not their purpose and structure, are given in Section IV. The sites are known to us as "Project Early Start" and "Project Co-Op."

Persons Involved in the Technical Assistance

The focus of TADS technical assistance, and therefore of the case study observations, is on program development and the persons who make it happen. Personnel involved in program development at project sites include the project director, the project coordinator, members of the program staff, and others at the site who participate in, influence, or administer the project. Personnel involved in program development from the technical assistance agency include the entire TADS staff, to some degree, and more specifically the technical assistance coordinator who is assigned to the project, and the persons on the TADS staff or contracted by TADS to provide the technical assistance (the technical assistance providers).

For the purpose of this case study, the actual names and the personal and professional characteristics of all persons who participated in technical assistance at the selected case study sites remain confidential. A list of the participants in the technical assistance, using fictitious names, is provided at the beginning of each case description (see Section IV).

Selection of the Case Study Observers

Reviews of the literature and existing case studies demonstrated the critical importance of the observers to the quality of observations and subsequent development of the case. Such studies suggested that observers are needed who are knowledgeable of organizations and the roles of the people in them, and are sensitive to personal interactions and changes. In addition, observers must be keenly perceptive and able to translate their perceptions into comprehensive, clear, and meaningful descriptions.

For these reasons, TADS contracted with Shirley K. Behr and John R. B. Hawes, Jr. to assist in developing the case study and to conduct the observations. Both case study observers had extensive experience as consultants to developing programs and had directed programs in which they had demonstrated personal and political skills. Their accomplishments suggested a level of competence that would strongly enhance the case study.

The TADS Staff

Developing, directing, and producing the case study were the responsibility of the evaluation staff at TADS, under the direction of Tanya Suarez, Associate Director of TADS for Evaluation. Pat Vandiviere, the Program Evaluation Specialist, had responsibility for coordinating all aspects of the case study. Much of the planning for the study was conducted by the observers and what was called the "TADS Case Study Staff." This group consisted of Tanya Suarez, Pat Vandiviere, Pat Trohanis (Director of TADS), Tal Black (Associate Director of TADS for Demonstration Projects), and the two technical assistance coordinators (known this year as Bob Mitchell and Carol Turner) who were responsible for the technical assistance to the case study projects. Other meetings and discussions regarding the case study were held with the entire TADS professional staff.

SECTION III

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR THE STUDY

This second year of the study was conducted under the "umbrella" framework developed by the observers and the TADS staff during the initial planning for the first year (Behr, Hawes, Vandiviere, and Suarez, 1981). Four basic questions were developed at that time for investigation:

1. What client characteristics affect technical assistance?

   (e.g., environmental or system characteristics, problems or needs of clients, roles, responsibilities and characteristics of the direct recipients of technical assistance)

2. What technical assistance provider characteristics affect technical assistance?

   (e.g., skills, competencies, roles taken during technical assistance, values/personality characteristics)

3. What characteristics of the technical assistance event(s) themselves influence the technical assistance?

   (e.g., type, consistency, amount and degree of client involvement, degree of personal contact, phase of intervention)

4. What are the outcomes, effects, and/or impacts of technical assistance?

The Year One report focused primarily on the first two questions. A wealth of information about the clients and providers was available after multiple observations of events and many interviews with the TADS staff.

After consultation with the TADS case study staff and confirmation with the entire staff, the observers agreed to focus the study during the second year on the second and third questions, i.e., the technical assistance providers and the technical assistance events themselves, with a special emphasis on the procedures and activities of technical assistance coordination. To assist in this effort, the technical assistance coordinators maintained logs of their activities, conversations, decisions, and plans. These logs were provided to the case study observers each month, and follow-up telephone interviews helped to clarify information and keep the observers up to date.

While this shift in emphasis to enhance the study of technical assistance coordination changed the overall plan a bit for this year, the basic philosophy as developed by the observers still held:

> The purpose of the study is to meet certain information needs required by TADS. The goal is to describe technical assistance as a total process by illustrating the dynamics that occur during specific technical assistance events. The unit of study, then, is neither the provider of technical assistance (TADS) nor the client of technical assistance (HCEEP projects), but, rather, the technical assistance process occurring as the result of the interaction between the provider organization and the client organization.

It should be noted that the study questions and philosophical approach taken were designed specifically for the TADS Technical Assistance Case Study project. To be appropriate for case studies of other technical assistance delivery systems, some modification may be required. Further, it should be remembered that during 1980-81 the study conducted within this framework was limited to technical assistance as it was delivered to two second-year project sites. It may not be reasonable, therefore, to assume that the results apply to technical assistance as it is delivered to HCEEP projects over their three-year demonstration period.

With these cautions in mind, the reader is invited to review technical assistance as it was provided to Projects "Early Start" and "Co-Op" during their second year of funding.

SECTION IV

THE CASES: PROJECT EARLY START AND PROJECT CO-OP

CASE #1: PROJECT EARLY START

Participants

(in order of their appearance in the case description)

Jim	Case Study Observer
Carol Turner	TADS Technical Assistance Coordinator
Harry Newman	Project Coordinator
Perry Hargett	TADS Technical Assistance Coordinator
Helen	Nurse
Bill Roland	School Superintendent/Project Director
Elaine	Social Worker
Eric	Speech Pathologist
Phyllis	Occupational Therapist
Randy	Head Teacher
Jill	Assistant Teacher
Winnifred	Teaching Assistant
Jackie	Teaching Aide
Belinda	Teaching Aide
Travis Morgan	TADS Staff Member
Mary Smith	TADS Evaluation Specialist
Hursel Conway	TADS Evaluation Specialist
Dave Kramer	Technical Assistance Consultant
Florence Green	Technical Assistance Consultant
Norm Linden	Technical Assistance Consultant

Prologue: A New Beginning

The trees were stripped of leaves and the overcast sky signaled the approach of snow. Observing the scene through his office window, Jim waited until the Canadian geese flying overhead were completely out of sight before shifting his attention to his desk calendar, opened to the second week of the new year. The second-year needs assessment for Project Early Start was scheduled for later in the week, and Jim planned to spend the next few hours preparing for his observation of the event.

Six months had elapsed since completion of the first year's case study of Project Early Start. The project was now halfway through its second year of operation, and the needs assessment would be the first major technical assistance event to occur this year. Hoping to put the activities of the past six months in clear perspective, Jim had talked last week with Carol Turner, TADS technical assistance coordinator for the project, and Harry Newman, Project Early Start's new coordinator. Now Jim read the notes he'd made during his conversation with Carol when she'd called to give him the date of the needs assessment and to inform him of changes that had occurred at the project site.

This year, said Carol, the project elected to use a "self needs assessment," an alternative method for conducting needs assessments that was of special professional interest to Carol. It allowed projects to conduct their own needs assessment without assistance from a consultant. A Needs Assessment Procedures Manual had been designed by TADS to assist second- and third-year projects in preparing for and conducting the self-assessment when they chose this option. Carol recognized the potential value of observing and documenting this process as part of the case study, and she was glad that Jim would be able to serve as observer for Project Early Start's self-assessment this year.

Carol outlined for Jim her contacts with Project Early Start during the past six months. Late in September she called Bud Fisher (who was at that time the project coordinator) to discuss technical assistance plans for the coming year, and to recommend that since the project was in its second year, he consider a self-administered needs assessment rather than an on-site assessment. Bud responded that he would soon be leaving the project to take a job in another state. He agreed that self-assessment was a good idea, but said the final decision would depend on whether the new coordinator was a current staff member with prior needs assessment experience, or new to the project. When Carol called Bud three weeks later she learned that Harry Newman, the project's part-time speech pathologist, was to be the new coordinator; Harry would decide about the needs assessment within the next several days. Carol immediately mailed the needs assessment materials to Harry to assist him in making his decision. Her accompanying letter emphasized the high priority she would place on his phone calls about the needs assessment and assured Harry she would make arrangements to take his calls at any time. She wrote that she was looking forward to completing this first step toward beginning technical assistance services and to meeting Harry at the project directors' conference scheduled for December. When she followed her letter with a phone call two weeks later, Carol discovered that school personnel and most of the project staff were out on strike. This was causing many delays for the project, but Harry said he hoped to have the new staff assignments completed within the next several weeks; he would then be in a better position to establish a date for the needs assessment. Carol described the potential benefits of both types of needs assessments and again suggested consideration of self-assessment.

When Carol called Harry in three weeks to request the assessment date, she learned that Harry was still in the process of hiring staff and had not yet established a date. Six weeks later, Harry called Carol to say that all staff were hired and the self-administered needs assessment was scheduled for the end of the following week. Carol was glad to have the date confirmed, but told Harry she would be unavailable personally to help by telephone because she was scheduled to conduct another project's on-site needs assessment at that time. She arranged for Perry Hargett, another TADS technical assistance coordinator, to be available by phone and encouraged Harry to call Perry with any questions arising during the self-administered needs assessment.

As the case study observer concluded his review of the notes he had taken during his phone conversation with Carol, Jim reflected that Carol had provided him with many details of her contacts with the project during the past six months. Now he turned his attention to the notes he had made of his conversation with Harry Newman, who had given Jim the sequence of events at the project.

Matt Ellis (the project director) and Walter Fox (director of special education for the school system) had both resigned during the summer. The strike had begun at the end of September. Bud Fisher (the project coordinator), Harry Newman (speech pathologist at that time), and Helen (the project nurse) had remained on their jobs during the strike, which did not end until early December. It had been necessary to close the project for several weeks because there were no teachers.

Harry Newman had assumed the role of project coordinator in mid-October. When the project re-opened, Harry spent most of his time in the classrooms, working with the children. His efforts to recruit new staff were impeded by legal issues pertaining to the strike. Harry's time and attention during these months were devoted to conducting the program, hiring and orienting new staff, dealing with parents' concerns, attending to administrative details, and completing the project's continuation proposal. He had been unable to attend the HCEEP project directors' conference in December and thus had not met with Carol as they had originally planned.

Harry had also described for Jim some recent administrative changes. Bill Roland (school superintendent) was now the project director, and Harry reported directly to Bill rather than to the director of special education. Harry was responsible for everyday direction and coordination of the project; Bill did not wish to be involved unless there was a significant problem requiring his personal attention. Harry was comfortable with this change and believed it facilitated more efficient project management. All project staff except Helen (project nurse) were new to the project, and two additional teaching positions had been funded.

Describing the results of last year's technical assistance and current project plans, Harry said the project's design and implementation remained the same. He was following the staff development plan designed last year with the help of technical assistance, but believed it would need revision. The parent/child interaction instrument, designed by Matt and Bud with the help of a consultant, had never been shared with the rest of the staff. Harry and Helen had reviewed it when they discovered it in the files, and both agreed it was not relevant for the project this year. Bud Fisher had passed along information from the TADS small group meeting on dissemination and continuation, and Harry was interested in this area of the project. Concerning this year's technical assistance, Bud had planned to conduct a self-assessment and Harry concurred for several reasons. Under the circumstances, he was uncertain when the assessment could be scheduled, and he was reluctant to set a specific time for meeting with an outside consultant. While his participation in last year's technical assistance had been limited, Harry felt comfortable with the needs assessment process and he knew TADS was available by phone if he ran into problems. Reading the case study of the project's first year of technical assistance had helped to make the assessment process seem less intimidating than it might have been otherwise. The case study had helped Harry put things in perspective, but it had also indicated the need to define the project's technical assistance needs clearly.

Harry told Jim he was concerned about the time lost because of the strike, especially for the children and their parents. He wanted to maintain a balance between what needed to be done and what could actually be accomplished. Jim had then asked Harry how he approached his job as project coordinator. Harry said he tried not to be overly authoritarian; he attempted to include staff in the decision-making process, and was aware that last year the staff had often felt excluded, especially from TADS' technical assistance. The new staff were well qualified, and Harry planned to make good use of their multidisciplinary talents. The ability to get along with administrative staff at the school was also an important consideration for Harry.

The review had been helpful, and Jim now felt prepared for his role as case study observer. He looked forward to the new year, a fresh look at the case study, and a new beginning at Project Early Start.

The Needs Assessment

Day One

The threatened snow had become a reality, and anticipating traffic delays, Jim left the hotel earlier than usual. He didn't want Harry to delay the needs assessment on account of the case study observer. The meeting was to be held in the school library, and staff were just being seated when Jim arrived. Following a few brief introductions from Harry and some comments about the case study, Jim settled back to observe. A detailed agenda had been prepared to outline the staff's work for the next two days. Jim took a few minutes to review the schedule and identify the eight new staff members gathered around the library table. Substitute teachers had been hired for the day to insure participation of the entire project staff. Jim recalled that Harry Newman, project coordinator, had been the project's part-time speech pathologist last year; Helen was still serving in her original capacity as project nurse. Now he noted the new staff: Elaine was the project's social worker, Eric was speech pathologist, Phyllis was occupational therapist, and Randy was head teacher. The four other staff--Jill, Winnifred, Jackie, and Belinda--were teaching assistants and aides. Although the staff had been working together for only a short time, Jim observed that their interactions seemed comfortable and friendly.

Harry began with an explanation of the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP) and the Technical Assistance Development System (TADS). His tone was positive and confident as he explained TADS' purpose was to help the project accomplish its goals and be responsive to its needs rather than evaluative. Some of the project's success depended on how well the original grant had been written, and the needs assessment would provide a program planning review to assess their current status. Harry outlined the steps necessary to complete their draft of the technical assistance agreement, and then distributed the worksheets that would guide their task (HCEEP Demonstration Project Profile; see Appendix A). In reviewing the profile, Harry explained to the group that it had five sections: Services for Children, Services for Parents, Staff Development, Demonstration/Dissemination/Continuation, and Administration/Management. Each section was subdivided into three areas of "conceptualization," "implementation," and "evaluation." They would rate the items in each section to describe their project's status in conceptualizing or implementing the program. Then they would rate their status in evaluation for that section.

The first set of worksheets focused on the conceptualization of Services for Children. Harry read each item aloud, and paused to allow staff to comment about how they thought the item should be rated. The rating scale was: "3 (task completed/in operation)"; "2 (task partially completed)"; and "1 (must be considered and planned)." A "not relevant" rating also could be used if the item did not pertain to the project. Harry asked questions as they went along, making sure staff understood how various activities and procedures were conducted. The staff seemed eager to answer his questions, and for the most part, were knowledgeable. Harry described the project's screening procedures in detail because the staff had not yet been involved in that activity. Phyllis, the occupational therapist, and Eric, the speech pathologist, asked Harry to elaborate on various tests administered to the children.

Since some children would be too old for the project at the end of the year, Harry and Elaine (the social worker) led a discussion about the most appropriate referral procedures for these children. All of the tasks in this first section received a rating of "3," the highest possible rating, for conceptualization.

During their review of the implementation of Services for Children, Harry made ongoing distinctions between implementation and conceptualization. He explained the intent of the seed money that was supporting the project and the need to explore sources of continuation funding. Ratings for implementation and evaluation of Services for Children were divided between "2" and "3."

During the short break that followed, Jim had a chance to speak with Helen, the school nurse. She said she had a much better understanding of the project this year, and told Jim they had figured out a lot of things by themselves. Last year, the staff had been too self-oriented and always wanted someone to answer their concrete questions. Helen thought the needs assessment was a good vehicle for keeping the staff on their toes, and it provided them with some needed "pats on the back."

After the break, Harry turned to the worksheets on Services for Parents. Helen described in detail her role as nurse in working with parents, and she had the most input for assigning ratings in this area. Most of the tasks were rated "3" for conceptualization and implementation. Harry then described the parent/child interaction instrument designed the year before and asked if the staff thought there was a need for it. When Randy, the head teacher, said she thought the instrument could be useful, Helen voiced her objections. She said that particular instrument would not provide them with the information they wanted, and she described a different instrument she had recently learned to use. Randy agreed that the new form seemed to meet their needs.

Following a pleasant lunch hour, the staff focused on the Staff Development worksheets. Harry encouraged them to participate in making the ratings. Most items in this section received a rating of "3."

Before introducing the Demonstration/Dissemination/Continuation worksheets, Harry explained the meaning of the terms model and demonstration, recalling the staff's confusion with those terms the previous year. Harry thought there was a need for technical assistance with Continuation, particularly for himself and Bill Roland (school superintendent and project director). Harry said that although Bill didn't seem concerned, Harry felt they had limited time for securing continuation funds. Bill was counting on federal funds to support several school programs, and Harry envisioned a watered-down project. Harry also believed it was important for the project to become more cost effective. He thought on-site technical assistance in developing their continuation plan would be useful, and Helen agreed. She said it was important for Bill to define his role in this area so the entire burden would not fall on Harry.

Technical assistance needs also were identified in the area of Dissemination. Harry explained the meaning of replication and reviewed all items in this section, which were assigned a rating of "1" or "2." Based on some of last year's on-site technical assistance experiences, Helen didn't think on-site consultation would be beneficial, but agreed it might help to have someone give them feedback on the products they were developing for dissemination. Harry discussed the importance of assigning priorities and delineating their technical assistance needs, keeping TADS' available resources in mind.

All sections of the needs assessment worksheets except the Administrative/Management section had been completed by 3:30, and Harry made sure the staff had nothing further to discuss before ending the meeting. Elaine, the project social worker, remained for a short time to assist Harry with the Administrative/Management section. Harry read each item aloud and then rated it, allowing Jim to follow the process. Needs were identified for technical assistance in developing the project's advisory board, and in designing a system to collect, store, and retrieve evaluative data. All other items of this section were rated either as in operation or as partially completed.

While Harry concentrated on the worksheets, Jim had an opportunity to review his notes. The staff, as a whole, seemed knowledgeable and cohesive. They worked diligently, without any outward signs of conflict or serious differences of opinion. Although each had made a contribution to the process, some staff had participated more actively than others in the needs assessment. Jill (assistant teacher), Winnifred (teaching assistant), Jackie and Belinda (teacher aides), and Eric (speech pathologist) had been fairly quiet. Elaine (social worker), Phyllis (occupational therapist), and Randy (head teacher) were more vocal; but it was Helen who emerged as having greatest influence on the group. While Harry's role as project coordinator established his primary leadership position, Helen's length of service as project nurse seemed to give her an advantage over other staff members. Harry appeared

Harry described Dave's consulting style as directive, and said he found that style helpful. He knew very little about funding or advisory boards, and he thought Dave sensed this. Dave also seemed to understand Harry's role as well as his limitations. Dave had discussed with Harry many things that were really under Bill's supervision because he knew that Harry would be the one to present the information to Bill. Constraints on Bill's time had prevented him from attending the entire consultation and, Harry told Jim, Bill might not be ready to accept some of the suggestions made by the outside consultant.

Overall, Harry thought Dave had been well prepared to deliver the technical assistance. He had tailored his recommendations to meet both the project's and Harry's needs. Dave's flexibility and his ability to be concrete were especially valuable contributions. His suggestions were made with the entire school in mind, and he had discussed continuation funding in relation to all aspects of the project.

Harry planned to wait until he received Dave's written report before making decisions about the advisory board. He also planned to wait for the report before discussing the continuation plan with Bill. He would begin to implement those parts of the plan that Bill approved of. Harry was not sure how the plan would be completed, or when he would have time to do it. His time limitations were a very real concern for Harry. Unlike Dave, he did not have staff or board members to assist him with these responsibilities.

The following week, Jim talked on the phone with Dave Kramer, who said he thought the consultation had been productive. He had really enjoyed visiting the project and the school, and had found things to be

Dave, a matter of first defining the organization's goals and then selecting people to participate. He talked about the use of committees, but said this information might be more relevant for Bill and the school's board of directors.

When they finished their discussion on advisory boards, it was time for lunch. This relaxed hour gave Dave and Harry a chance for conversation about services and programs for handicapped children. The rest of the time was devoted to reviewing the budget and personnel; this information would help Dave prepare his recommendations for continuation funding. Dave planned to define potential budget possibilities as well as offering an approach to public relations, foundations, and other selected funding sources. He said he would be sure to see that both Harry and Bill received copies of his report. They concluded their meeting by selecting a date, one month later, for Dave's second visit to the project.

Follow-Up

Jim was anxious to hear Harry's evaluation of Dave Kramer's first consultation visit to Project Early Start. He was pleased to learn that Harry was satisfied with the consultation, and that Dave had contributed more than Harry had expected. Harry did not understand why Dave seemed to think the project needed more assistance with the advisory board than with the continuation plan. Perhaps Harry had not made his needs clear to TADS, or perhaps the communication had become confused, or perhaps Dave had misunderstood; in any event, the misunderstanding had not adversely affected the technical assistance.

continue the consultation. Dave asked Harry about the activity statement in question, and Harry recalled that it had been Carol's suggestion to develop it that way. Dave resolved the question for himself and Harry by pointing out that there are no clear boundaries between continuation and advisory board activities, so actually they were still on target for the technical assistance.

Harry reported to Dave on a brief conversation with Bill Roland earlier that morning. Although Bill wasn't scheduled to participate, he had wanted to know how the consultation was progressing, and he had assured Harry of support for his efforts to seek continuation funding, with the exception of research funds. Dave said he would not push any one funding direction; instead, he would send Harry samples of foundation requests and lists of potential foundation resources. He told Harry that the project's advisory board should be doing some of the work in this area, and suggested that they take the next hour to discuss the advisory board.

Harry had read the manual on advisory boards, and this made it easier for Dave to direct the consultation. He found himself "lecturing," at times, and verbalized how uncomfortable he was with this approach. Harry was listening attentively, however, and seemed satisfied with Dave's style of sharing information. Dave asked Harry to tell him how he would structure the advisory board if he were able to start all over again. Harry had definite ideas for change. Dave emphasized the importance of having powerful individuals on the advisory board, and gave several examples of such persons from his own experience. Harry wanted to know where to find that kind of people. It was, according to

When their meeting ended, Harry took Dave on a short tour of the school and the infant project. Dave was impressed with what he saw and with the progress Bill had obviously made since becoming superintendent. Harry described how much his own appreciation of Bill, both as a person and as an administrator, had grown.

It was late afternoon when they returned to the library, and only a brief amount of time was left for discussion. It had been a long and productive day, but there was still a lot of ground to be covered tomorrow.

Day Two

When Jim arrived to observe the second day's on-site consultation, he found Dave sitting at a desk in Harry's office. Harry was attending to some project details, and Dave was reviewing the technical assistance agreement to make sure he was following the plan. Dave told Jim he hoped to use some time that morning to review ways of structuring the project's advisory board and how that would tie in with the continuation plan. Although continuation and advisory board activities were closely related, Dave was confused by the wording of the technical assistance agreement activities. One of the activities listed for Priority 3 stated that Dave was to review the project's current plans for the advisory board and make recommendations about membership, roles, and functions by April 3. The timeline was such that Dave would have to attend to this need today if he were to meet the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement.

When Harry was ready to join them, they went to the library to agreed. Although the school's board of directors wanted the school to be more visible, Bill thought they did not have the time required for a high level of effort in this area.

Throughout most of this discussion, Harry remained a silent listener and observer. When Bill turned to Harry and said, "Well, this doesn't have anything to do with the project," Dave said, "Yes, it does." Dave pointed out that Bill needed to find ways of appealing to people's desire to support something significant, and he gave examples of successful strategies used at his own school. Bill told Dave about some of the things they had thought of doing to raise funds, but he wasn't sure how to go about doing them.

It was early afternoon when Bill's secretary called to remind him of an appointment. Before leaving, he shook hands with Dave and said he would be sure to see him the following day. After Bill left, Harry told Dave he had been impressed with the amount of time Bill devoted to the meeting. As a result, he was more convinced of Bill's support for the project. Dave mentioned the number of problems Bill appeared to be having with the school's board of directors, and Harry moved to Bill's defense, describing the lack of board support which he received.

Dave expressed a general concern that people in the field of education need to be more open and to let the public know what they are doing. If people understand a program's value, they are less likely to allow it to close. Professional educators rarely are taught that schools need to be advocates for handicapped children. Dave described the potential value of the project's advisory board as a link to the community with an investment in the project's continued existence.

original grant proposal. "Demonstration projects are encouraged to plan expensive programs which," said Bill, "are difficult to sell to other funding sources." Bill admitted he had ambivalent feelings about research, and thought the project should be funded through federal entitlement monies such as Medicaid. He also said he thought Project Early Start had a good program and was making an important contribution to the community.

Dave suggested that a newspaper article about the project might be a good strategy, but Bill thought this would not be very effective. Dave repeated his suggestion about seeking research funds, but Bill said he would be concerned about what would happen to the program when those funds ran out. Dave said that as a consultant, it was his job to make suggestions and recommendations, but that final decisions would of course be up to Bill. He encouraged Bill to keep an open mind as they talked, and then described his own very positive experiences in acquiring foundation funds.

Jim thought he noted a subtle change in the discussion as Dave and Bill shifted from a consultant-client relationship to one of a colleague-to-colleague exchange of information and ideas. Bill described his problems in trying to help the school's board of directors develop a more effective committee structure and approach to their responsibilities. Dave, in turn, described the well-designed committee structure and active involvement of his own board. They talked of common problems facing school superintendents, ranging from cash-flow difficulties to the impact of local politics. Dave said he thought Bill's school had rather low visibility in the community, and Bill a variety of funding bases. His project, on the other hand, was a new venture for the school, and continuation funding sources had not yet been pinned down. He stated that the overall responsibility for generating funds for the school belonged to Bill Roland, and Bill kept telling him not to worry about future monies. However, because Harry felt a deep responsibility for the project, it was difficult for him not to be concerned. Dave said that as he had read the project's proposal, he realized that opportunities for research would be of great interest; perhaps they should seek research funding as part of their continuation efforts. Harry and Dave agreed to discuss this with Bill when he joined them.

Dave's next questions were about previous public relations efforts. General public relations regarding the project was part of Harry's job. Dave expressed his concern about the limited public relations programs conducted by many schools. He thought it was important to let people know what was being done because there was money available for good programs. Unfortunately, he said, schools have a tendency to seek funds only when they face a crisis. It was important to have people visit the program so they could become an integral part of it.

Bill Roland joined their meeting at 10:30, and when the introductions were over Dave asked Bill, "Do you know why I'm here?" Bill said he had only a vague understanding. Dave proceeded to talk about the positive effectiveness of TADS, and of his role as a consultant for continuation funds and the advisory board. He described his own school which, though somewhat smaller, was similar to Bill's. Dave discussed the project's potential for obtaining research funds. Bill reported that OSE had required them to remove the research elements from their

On-Site Consultation: The First Visit

Day One

Dave Kramer was several things all at once--bright, vibrant, intense, relaxed, friendly. His reputation as a former HCEEP project director was excellent, and he was now working successfully as superintendent of a school for handicapped children in another state. He arrived at Project Early Start at 9:30 a.m., coming directly from the airport. Although he had been up and traveling since the very early morning hours, Dave didn't appear to be the least bit tired when he arrived at the school library.

After some brief introductory remarks, Harry explained to Dave that Bill Roland, the school superintendent and project director, would be joining them at 10:30. Dave began the consultation by explaining that it was his style to ask a lot of questions, and his first question was who had originally directed the project. Harry reviewed the lines of authority during the project's first year, and then described the changes that now made Harry, as project coordinator, directly responsible to Bill. In replying to Dave's inquiry about the advisory board, Harry said the project had never really used the board, and its selection had not been guided by any particular plan. Dave did not find that surprising; he thought project advisory boards often were established because the Office of Special Education (OSE) required them.

Dave then asked if other program directors at the school were responsible for acquiring funds to continue their programs, and if not, why Harry was responsible for continuing the funding for Project Early Start. Harry explained that other programs in the school operated with

Several days later, Carol received the signed Memorandum of Agreement from Harry. Everything was now in order, and TADS was ready to deliver the on-site technical assistance to Project Early Start.

The next day Carol called Harry to tell him of the decisions TADS had made regarding the amount of technical assistance that could be made available to the project. She identified Dave Kramer as the consultant chosen to work with the project on Priorities 1 and 3. Harry selected tentative dates for Dave's on-site consultation the following month, and Carol then called Dave to confirm his participation. Next, she sent the final Memorandum of Agreement to Harry, with a cover letter that indicated she was enclosing Dave's vita and some printed information about developing advisory boards. She reminded Harry that Dave would be consulting with the project on both Priorities 1 and 3, and suggested that Harry establish a date for Dave's follow-up consultation. Carol invited Harry to call her collect if he had any questions.

The next day, Harry called Carol to tell her of the date he had set for Dave's first consultation. Carol prepared an authorization for Dave's fee and travel expenses, and wrote a cover letter to accompany the materials Dave would need for the consultation. She sent him a copy of the project's proposal, of the technical assistance agreements for Priorities 1 and 3, travel expense vouchers, and evaluation forms. In her letter, she emphasized the fact that the primary purpose of Dave's consultation was to assist the project's director and coordinator in developing an overall approach for continuation funding. As this was to be a two-visit sequence, she suggested that Dave establish the date for his second visit during his first trip. She recommended that he take some time during each visit to review Harry's plan for the advisory board and to make some recommendations. Carol also indicated that she had sent Harry the manual on advisory boards which Dave had written.

Interlude

One week after completion of Project Early Start's needs assessment, Carol Turner received in her TADS office the materials and evaluation form from Harry Newman. While the needs assessment met most of the criteria on the evaluation form, Harry commented that it would have been helpful to have TADS provide more examples of the technical assistance agreement worksheets. He and his staff had attempted to do everything right, especially in the presence of the case study observer, but sometimes it had seemed they were trying to accommodate themselves to the process rather than searching for their own needs.

A month later, Carol met with TADS' Associate Director for Projects to discuss Project Early Start's total needs assessment package. In the interim, Carol had prepared a draft of the project's Memorandum of Agreement which listed the following technical assistance needs:

Priority 1: Assistance in developing a written plan for obtaining continuation resources

Priority 2: Assistance in developing an infant stimulation guide suitable for use by parents

Priority 3: Assistance in developing a plan for determining the advisory board's membership, roles, and functions

Together, Carol and the Associate Director agreed that Dave Kramer would be an excellent consultant to provide on-site technical assistance for Priority 1. Dave was a TADS consultant with strong skills in both developing funding sources and working with advisory boards. It seemed that he could provide needed information for Priority 3 as part of his on-site consultation for Priority 1. Two other consultants were tentatively identified to review and critique the project's parent/infant activity guide.

other project staff members, but she personally did not favor having an on-site consultant. After some discussion, Harry decided that a review and critique of the activity guide would adequately meet their technical assistance need.

The third technical assistance need was to develop a written policy for the advisory board. This subject appeared to require little discussion. The group were in agreement about their need for information in this area.

Follow-Up

The following week, Jim called Harry Newman to discuss the needs assessment. Harry seemed fairly happy with the outcome, although he said he wished Helen had been able to participate the second day. In fact, he thought he might have done a better job of summarizing staff needs had the entire staff been present the second day. However, the staff seemed satisfied with the needs assessment, and Harry was looking forward to receiving the technical assistance they had requested from TADS.

struggling with this issue, Jim faced his own dilemma. His role as observer required that he be a silent and unobtrusive presence, but Jim knew their problem could easily be resolved with a phone call to Perry Hargett at the TADS office. Jim perceived that this staff had pride and a desire to work out their own problems whenever possible, but they seemed unable to resolve this particular issue. Jim therefore stepped outside his observer's role by suggesting that Harry call TADS, which Harry did from the phone in the library. After Harry related their questions, Perry gave the explanations that allowed them to proceed without further delay.

Randy and Jill agreed that it was Harry's place to decide on the schedule and the amount of consulting time. Bill's participation would be important in developing the continuation plan, and Harry thought an extended timeline would be necessary to accommodate Bill's busy schedule. He believed it would be possible to have the continuation plan developed by May 1. In discussing the type of technical assistance needed, Harry thought he would like to talk with someone who had been through the process of obtaining continuation funding. He expressed concern about getting Bill involved, and hoped that a consultant could help stimulate completion of the process.

After a break for lunch, Harry met again with the two teachers, Randy and Jill, to discuss the type of technical assistance they required to develop a parent/infant activity guide for dissemination. They talked over the pros and cons of having an on-site consultant to help with product development, or an outside written review and critique of their finished product. Jill said she would welcome the opinions of comfortable and competent in his role of coordinator. He seemed to have the respect and cooperation of the entire staff and, in turn, had high regard for them.

Jim noted finally that the day's work on the needs assessment had been completed on schedule. The groundwork had been prepared for devloping the technical assistance needs statements.

Day Two

When Jim arrived the following morning, he found Harry, Randy, and Jill seated at the library table. The head teacher and assistant teacher were to work with Harry while the rest of the staff resumed their regular project duties. Harry opened the Needs Assessment Manual to the section entitled "Identifying Technical Assistance Needs," and read it aloud for the benefit of Randy and Jill. The three reviewed the worksheets completed the previous day, agreeing that their two primary needs were in continuation funding and product development and that the previously identified need for technical assistance in evaluation was not as important as the other two. Working as a team to develop the needs statements, they discussed each need and how they thought it should be stated. After reaching consensus, Harry wrote the statements as Randy and Jill dictated them.

Their work went smoothly until it came time to develop the technical assistance objectives. The three were concerned that the project might not receive the technical assistance really needed unless they stated the objectives clearly and correctly. Reading and discussing the samples in the manual failed to clarify their dilemma. While they were well organized. The material and information he received from TADS were congruent with his own impressions of the project, and he thought his skills were a good match for the project's needs.

Dave had been well satisfied with the amount of time Bill Roland had spent in their meeting, but he had the impression that Bill was not open to different kinds of approaches. He thought some changes would be useful in the way Bill's board of directors was functioning. Only a limited amount could be done in this situation, however, considering Bill's point of view about boards, foundations, and research. Dave feared that Harry might be caught in the middle, and this might dilute the impact of the consultation. The most important point, according to Dave, was that Bill spent a significant amount of time in their meeting. Dave's next visit would reveal the degree to which his written recommendations were effective.

Interlude

Harry called Carol the week after Dave Kramer's visit. He gave her the date selected for Dave's second visit and asked about the activity statement regarding technical assistance Priority 3 that had caused confusion. Carol said the statement's intent was in keeping with the original agreement and that the work they were doing seemed to be on target.

A week later, Carol received Harry's evaluation report of Dave Kramer's first consultation. She was glad to note that Harry was well satisfied with the technical assistance provided for developing a continuation funding plan. Harry indicated that he had gained an overview of the components necessary for obtaining continuation funding. Potential funding sources had been identified and activities to implement the continuation plan had been discussed. Harry found Dave's suggestions to be applicable to specific project needs. While there had been a tendency to digress from the main topic, Harry reported that the time had not been wasted. The consultation had been very helpful, but Harry wondered, in retrospect, if the scope had been too broad for their particular situation.

Harry had sent a separate evaluation report for the consultation on advisory boards. He had found Dave's suggestions for working with advisory boards to be very practical, and wrote that Dave's extensive experience in this area was evident. Dave had spent considerable time relating anecdotes, but they were not always helpful in clarifying the subject. Harry pointed out that advisory boards had not been designated as a high priority by the project but Dave had understood this to be a primary focus of the technical assistance.

Dave Kramer, in his written report to Project Early Start, pointed out that the element of continuation funding, in this particular case, was intimately connected with the make-up of the advisory board and with the project's dissemination efforts. His report included detailed recommendations on continuation funding, advisory board, public awareness programs, and dissemination. Dave had also developed a sample budget. Carol was glad to note that Dave's report had been written early enough to give both Harry and Bill time to become familiar with it before Dave's next consultation visit.

In his evaluation report to TADS, Dave indicated that the major accomplishments of his consultation had been to provide new ideas on funding and on revamping the advisory board, and to discuss a public relations program. Dave believed one of the strengths of his consultation had been the open discussion with Bill Roland on the subject of continuation funding. Bill had seemed interested in pursuing the funding suggestions Dave had offered, with some exceptions. Dave was impressed with the school and with Project Early Start, and he noted that they had a good administration and a competent staff.

On-Site Consultation: The Second Visit

Dave Kramer was looking forward to his second visit to Project Early Start; he was eager to learn what progress had been made in the month since his first visit. The traffic was unusually heavy, but he realized he had timed his trip from the airport well as he saw Harry Newman pull into the school parking lot just as his taxi arrived.

As they walked to the library, Harry reported he had not yet had a chance to discuss Dave's written recommendations with Bill Roland. In fact, he wasn't sure Bill's recent schedule had given him time to read the report. Bill was still telling Harry not to worry about continuation funding, although he had indicated he wouldn't stand in the way if Harry wished to pursue potential sources, including foundations.

Harry and Dave settled into comfortable chairs, and Harry said Bill was still hoping to acquire federal continuation funds, which depended on political issues that Harry didn't fully understand. Dave suggested that Harry develop a formal, written funding plan. This might help Bill to understand Harry's concerns and the efforts he was making to acquire funds. Dave thought it would be a mistake to depend on federal funds; such funds currently were in jeopardy, and it would be wise to explore diversified sources.

Dave tempered his inquiries about progress in writing the continuation plan with his understanding of the many demands on Harry's time. Harry thought he could have the plan completed by June first, and he was still interested in pursuing foundation sources. Dave agreed the project had a good program and organization, and encouraged Harry to pursue this course of action. He asked if Harry had a timeline for developing a proposal for foundation funding, wondering whether Harry might be "pushing" a little. Harry said August first might be a realistic timeline.

In response to Dave's question about how other programs similar to Project Early Start acquired their continuation funds, Harry said it was a matter of who assumed that responsibility for the organization. In the case of his project, Harry believed it ultimately would be up to Bill to pursue the funding. Harry had discussed continuation funding with the staff, and although they were interested and concerned, they had little time for the work that would be required.

Bill stopped by to say hello to Dave, explaining he could stay for only a few minutes. He was busy writing a funding proposal for one of the other school programs. He and Dave exchanged a few comments about the process of writing grant proposals. When Bill left, Harry said Bill's brief visit was an indication of the good impression Dave had made on him. Harry expressed his admiration for Bill's ability to work well under pressure and thought it was possible Bill would get federal continuation funds after all. However, Harry was uncomfortable in waiting until the last minute when it might be too late to develop other sources.

Harry said he had had a chance to discuss the public relations program with Bill, who was concerned that this work be done well. There had been a short segment about the project on TV, and Bill had sent memos to the school's board of directors, encouraging them to watch it. Harry was also considering writing a newspaper article based on an idea he had gotten from one of the articles Dave had sent him.

Bill's board of directors had formed committees since Dave's last visit and today, for the first time, several board members were having lunch at the school and visiting the programs. As a matter of fact, Harry and the other program directors had been asked to have lunch with the board members and present brief descriptions of their programs. Harry apologized for having to leave, but Dave agreed his attendance was very important.

When Harry returned, Dave focused attention on the project's advisory board. The two reviewed the school's organizational chart to determine where the project advisory board fit in the hierarchy. Dave encouraged Harry's efforts to determine the most important aspects of the advisory board, and helped him define what the parameters should be. Throughout their discussion, Dave checked with Harry to be sure his comments and suggestions were clear.

Their meeting drew to a close in the late afternoon. Before he left, Dave assured Harry he would send his consultation report and recommendations as quickly as possible. He also said he would, of course, be interested in receiving continued reports from Harry on the project's progress.

Interlude

Carol had received the evaluation reports on Dave Kramer's second visit to Project Early Start. Harry Newman reported that the major accomplishments of the technical assistance had been development of an advisory board plan and a continuation plan. Harry had gained knowledge of funding processes, and he thought Dave had devoted a great deal of time and effort to meeting the needs of the project. This second consultation had been more useful than the first, wrote Harry, because he had a better understanding of the problems. As a result, Dave had not had to spend as much time covering background information.

Dave's evaluation report indicated several major accomplishments. A new organization plan had been completed for involvement of the advisory board, and an outline of the continuation funding plan had been developed. Dave thought he had been successful in impressing upon Bill Roland the value of the school board's involvement in Project Early Start as well as in other school programs. Dave said their meetings had provided a good beginning, and he thought the project was now ready to develop and carry out a continuation plan. Harry had sent a copy of the continuation plan outline to Dave, along with a letter of thanks in which he expressed appreciation of Dave's time and effort and said the consultation had exceeded his expectations.

Harry had also written a letter to Carol, thanking TADS for arranging Dave's consultation which had provided the project with much-needed assistance. His letter also informed Carol that he was waiting to receive the preparation form to complete for the review and critique of the parent/infant activity guide, the project's Priority 2 technical assistance need.

Carol sent the preparation form to Harry with a cover letter which stated she would let Harry know the names of the consultants as soon as he returned the completed preparation form and a copy of the activity guide. Carol also took this opportunity to express regret that she and Harry had not had many contacts this year. She trusted he would not hesitate to let her know if TADS' resources could be of further help. Such requests, said Carol, could be handled informally and would not require formal agreements or evaluations.

Two weeks later, Harry called to ask Carol for an extension of time for sending the activity guide. Carol suggested a two-week extension, and was surprised when Harry's materials arrived by express mail exactly on the extended deadline date. Harry had obviously mailed the materials over the weekend, and Carol hoped he had not worked on Saturday just to meet the deadline.

Carol called Florence Green and Norm Linden, the consultants who had been tentatively selected for the review and critique, to confirm their participation. Then she called Harry to give him the consultants' names. Carol forwarded to the consultants copies of the project's abstract, completed preparation forms, and the activity guide. In her cover letter, she sent details about Project Early Start and what they were hoping to receive from this technical assistance.

Consultation: Review and Critique of Parent/Infant Activity Guide

Jim was sitting in his office, reading copies of the reviews completed by Florence Green and Norm Linden. As he looked over the reports from each consultant, he reflected on his conversations with them. Florence Green had enjoyed her assignment to review Project Early Start's activity guide. In her letter to the project, she had given many positive strokes while at the same time making a number of suggestions for improving the format and content of the guide. She stated very strongly that she believed this product had great potential for the field, and encouraged the project to develop it with wide dissemination in mind. She suggested that it be developed to stand alone, keeping the language and drawings simple and field-testing it locally before final production. Florence was positive and specific in her recommendations, and asked Harry to send her a copy of the final product.

Like Florence, Norm Linden had enjoyed reviewing the guide. His written review centered around the content and format, and was less specific than Florence's. Norm also indicated that the project had done a fine job in structuring the guide as a useful tool for parents. He had requested an opportunity for a telephone consultation to make more specific recommendations concerning individual items on the guide, and in his cover letter he had told Harry he would call the following week to discuss those items.

As he read the reviews again, Jim noticed the differences in writing style of the two reviews, and wondered what influence these differences might have in the project's acceptance of suggestions. He hoped he would learn this when he received feedback from the project during his end-of-year visit and from his conversations with Carol Turner at TADS.

Interlude

It was the middle of June, and TADS' administrative tasks relating to Project Early Start's second year of technical assistance were almost complete. Carol had submitted the necessary paperwork for processing payments to Florence Green and Norm Linden, and had recently received Harry Newman's evaluation of their review and critique of the parent/ infant activity guide.

Harry rated all aspects of Florence Green's consultation as "excellent." The major accomplishments of her review and critique were exploring ideas for dissemination, format modification, and content revision. Her very specific recommendations and helpful examples had been especially useful, as were the additional materials she had sent to Harry. Norm Linden's consultation ratings were divided between "good" and "average." His major contributions had been revision of content and his follow-up telephone call to discuss the dissemination plan. Harry thought, however, that most of Norm's suggestions were too general to be very useful.

The final task involved the project's completion of an End-of-Year Survey designed to assess the effectiveness and impact of TADS' delivery of technical assistance. Carol mailed the Survey form to Harry, along with a letter to explain its purpose and a request that Harry sign a short statement which would confirm completion of the technical assistance agreement.

In reviewing her file and reflecting on the year during a phone conversation with Jim, Carol expressed some concern about her limited contacts with Harry during the year. She regretted that circumstances had prevented Harry's attending the HCEEP directors' conference in December, when she would have had an opportunity to talk with him personally. She also regretted that Harry had not commented on the statements in her letter referring to their limited contacts and to the availability of additional TADS resources. She wondered whether the deadline established for review and critique of the activity guide had been a help or hindrance. She was curious about Harry's thoughts on the chances for project continuation funding, and what he thought they would need to work on the following year. Her hunch was that Harry was feeling better about the continuation plan, but the project was still a long way from actually identifying, requesting, and receiving continuation funds.

Based on her phone contacts with Harry and on the completed evaluation forms for the technical assistance events, Carol's impression was that Harry was satisfied with the assistance TADS had provided this year. It would have been possible to provide more assistance if Harry had requested it. However, TADS uses a responsive approach, and Carol usually didn't initiate contacts unless a project indicated they had additional needs. She might have been more directive and gone beyond what she considered her primary job, but Harry's evaluations had not indicated other needs, nor had there been any negative responses to the technical assistance provided.

Epilogue

It was mid-June, and Jim was visiting Project Early Start to capture impressions of the year's technical assistance from the project's point of view before he began to write his case study report. He planned to spend most of the day interviewing Harry Newman and Bill Roland, who had been primary recipients of the technical assistance.

Harry met Jim at the door to the library where their morning meeting was to take place. As they settled at the conference table, Harry expressed concern about the amount of time Bill might have available that day. Hursel Conway and Mary Smith (TADS evaluation specialists) had visited the project just the week before. Their purpose was to express TADS' thanks for continued cooperation in the case study, and to discuss any concerns about the process. Bill had talked with them for about an hour, and Harry was concerned that Bill might consider Jim's visit a further intrusion on his time. Bill really had very little participation in the project's activities, and he felt no need to be involved in day-to-day operations. Harry explained that Bill's administrative style was to trust his staff; while this might make him seem distant to outsiders, he really was a caring and compassionate administrator. Jim said he appreciated Harry's concerns and understood it would be important to have Bill know why this interview was essential for the case study.

Bill greeted Jim cordially when he joined them in the library. Jim explained that an important dimension of the case study was to look at the technical assistance from the chief administrator's point of view. Bill showed a willingness to cooperate, and he spent over three hours sharing his perceptions and concerns about technical assistance and federally funded projects with Jim and Harry. His first observation was that TADS could not change the environment in which a project operates because that environment is so complex. Technical assistance can deal only with the obvious, within the context of the situation and the environment. For example, Dave Kramer really had some good things to say and had allowed Bill to talk candidly and casually. Dave understood what Bill talked about because he, too, was a school superintendent. However, Dave couldn't know the political environment surrounding the school. What might work well for Dave in his state would not work at all where Bill's school was located. Bill had enjoyed the time spent with Dave and appreciated his ideas and efforts, but Dave hadn't told Bill anything he hadn't already known.

Bill acknowledged that there was some gratification from receiving the attention of a consultant, especially in situations where there are limited resources to call upon. As far as he was concerned, however, technical assistance from TADS was no different from the advice given by many licensing agency representatives who made site visits to the school every year. Each had suggestions to make and advice to give. Superintendents really have very few choices, because so much is dictated by licensing requirements and system idiosyncracies.

As the interview drew to a close, Bill said that obtaining continuation funds for the project was one of his greatest concerns. He was convinced that the project was performing an important community service. As for technical assistance, Bill placed his confidence in the staff, especially Harry. Technical assistance was all right, if the staff wanted it.

After Bill left, Jim and Harry discussed the year's technical assistance from Harry's point of view. Harry's involvement with TADS had begun at a very difficult time, and he thought the self-administered needs assessment had been conducted too early. The project had so many needs just to keep going, and TADS had not been very high on their list of priorities at that particular time. Their interaction with TADS was as a second-year project when, in fact, they were operating as a first-year project. Harry believed the TADS process should be tailored to fit a project where it is in actuality, rather than where it is chronologically.

As a consequence of feeling under pressure to complete the needs assessment, Harry had not thought TADS would be interested in the project's non-technical assistance needs. Carol had kept calling to find out if a date had been selected for the assessment, and Harry had missed several of her calls because he was so involved in project operations. Even though he and Carol had a number of conversations about the assessment date, there was never any in-depth communication about what was really going on. Harry felt uncomfortable about sharing problems with a "stranger"; he had never met Carol and hadn't had any orientation to TADS. Looking back, he wished he had made all of this clear to Carol at the beginning of the year. That beginning had influenced all of their interactions, and their conversations had focused on scheduling matters and business-related tasks. It just hadn't seemed appropriate to say more, and although Carol always was pleasant and polite, Harry had felt more at ease in telling her things were "under control." On the other hand, Harry reported, if Carol had asked a lot of probing questions, he might have thought she was "snooping."

Harry had finally decided just to go ahead with the needs assessment and get it out of the way. He knew technical assistance couldn't meet a project's needs unless the needs assessment was done well. The staff had lacked confidence and approached the needs assessment with apprehension. The needs assessment process asks people to do a very difficult thing in reviewing their total program, something they might not be ready to do. The staff had been professionally young and still needed to learn that it was appropriate to express needs. They had felt it was necessary to be on their best behavior because they were being observed, and the needs assessment, as it was conducted, might have been more for "show" than to express real needs.

Harry said he believed that timing had an unfortunate effect on the review and critique of the parent/infant activity guide. The original timeline for that technical assistance had been set during the needs assessment, and it proved to be unrealistic. Harry had called Carol to request a time extension, explaining that he did not have a secretary to type the guide. Carol had suggested he send a handwritten copy which could be typed at the TADS office. Harry had interpreted this suggestion as Carol's being judgmental about his need for more time. He had tried to meet TADS' extended timeline. In general, he had tried to meet all of TADS' timelines during the year, and believed he had ended up doing twelve months' work in six months.

Harry had enjoyed Dave Kramer's consultation a great deal, and he believed it had given him a foundation of new information. Dave had made Harry feel comfortable in sharing both the project's strengths and weaknesses, but Harry was still uncertain about following through on Dave's specific recommendations for continuation funding. The advisory board had been created to fulfill federal regulations and was not a high priority need for the project. Harry thought the board might have value if it were properly organized, but it was too soon to judge the impact of the technical assistance. It was also too early to know the impact of the review and critique of the activity guide.

As he discussed Carol's comment in her letter about their lack of contacts, Harry admitted feeling a little defensive and wondering if Carol thought he wasn't doing his job. TADS obviously had a lot to offer that he hadn't taken advantage of because he hadn't known it was available. Most of his interactions with Carol had occurred under pressure that precluded his acquiring additional information. In retrospect, Harry understood that Carol was operating under her own constraints and timelines. Harry suggested to Jim that technical assistance is not as significant to a project as it is to TADS. A project has multiple purposes and activities, while TADS' sole function is to provide technical assistance. Harry felt this might have influenced the interactions between TADS and Project Early Start; what he perceived as pressure might have been Carol's just trying to do her job.

As they concluded their meeting, Jim thanked Harry for his open sharing which, Jim said, would help considerably to enrich the case study. On the way to the airport, Jim noted that he wasn't yet ready to write his observations for the second-year case study report. There were still a few information gaps to fill in order to achieve some closure for this eventful year.

When he returned to his own office, Jim called Carol to learn the results of the End-of-Year Survey that Harry had completed. The Survey covered a number of areas, and Jim was interested in hearing how Harry had evaluated the technical assistance provided to meet the needs stated in the Memorandum of Agreement. Carol said that while the Survey did contain positive reactions, she was disappointed in the number of negative responses. Harry had indicated the project's identified technical assistance needs had not changed in content or purpose over the course of the year. The written continuation plan was now conceptualized, and TADS' contribution to this effort had been significant. TADS had also contributed somewhat to the development of the parent/infant activity guide and the plan for the advisory board.

On the End-of-Year Survey, positive impacts of technical assistance were noted in the areas of program analysis and clarification, staff knowledge, product development, benefits to parents, record-keeping, development and use of the project advisory board, and overall planning for demonstration/dissemination/continuation. Negative impacts of technical assistance were noted in several items related to the project staff--roles, responsibilities, communication, and attitude/morale. Mary Smith, TADS evaluation specialist, had made a follow-up phone call to the project to obtain information concerning the reasons for the negative impact ratings. Harry had explained to Mary that the two major negative factors were the project staff's difficulty in completing the needs assessment confidently, and the amount of time that the continuation funding technical assistance and the case study visit by TADS had taken from Bill Roland's busy schedule.

Harry had rated his satisfaction with the year's technical assistance as "average" and explained his rating with the comment:

> The needs assessment is the basis of most of the technical assistance a project receives. Our project needed a more thorough orientation to TADS and the needs assessment and this lack of knowledge adversely affected not only the needs assessment but the rest of the technical assistance received.

During their conversation, Jim recalled that Carol was responsible for coordinating TADS' technical assistance for seventeen projects, and as Carol discussed her ideas with Jim it was obvious that she had given a great deal of thought to her interactions with Project Early Start. Her style was non-directive, but in the case of Early Start she now thought a more direct approach might have been more appropriate. Had she known the real situation the project was in, Carol would not have recommended setting the date for the needs assessment until Harry thought they were ready. She would, instead, have negotiated an exception to TADS' contract deadline for completing needs assessments, or they might have provided technical assistance without a needs assessment. She also thought that under these exceptional circumstances she might have recommended an on-site needs assessment.

Carol told Jim she wished she had made a greater effort to establish personal contact with Harry. She had assumed that Bud Fisher, who was coordinator last year, would have transmitted all of the necessary information about TADS to Harry. She had missed the point that Project Early Start was operating more like a first- than a second-year project. The changes in key leadership and staff positions should have signaled her to make a more concentrated effort to understand the project's dynamics.

Two weeks later, Jim called Harry Newman to ask about the status of the project's continuation funding plan. Harry said a revised draft of the plan had just been completed and there were a few changes. The emphasis now was on seeking federal rather than foundation funds. This seemed to fit better into the school's administrative structure. Since the project was to become part of the school program at the end of the project's third year, its funding structure needed to be similar to that of other school programs. A further change was elimination of a major public relations activity recommended by Dave Kramer. Its purpose had been to assist the project to secure foundation funding, but there just wasn't enough time to accomplish this task. Dave had provided an overview of funding possibilities, and Harry was still considering applying to foundations for supplemental funds. The major thrust was for federal funds, however, and Bill Roland was handling that task.

As they concluded their telephone conversation, Jim believed that he had gathered all the facts he needed. Now he was prepared to write his observations for Part II of the case study report on Project Early Start.

CASE #2: PROJECT CO-OP

Participants

(in order of their appearance in the case description)

Bob Mitchell	TADS Technical Assistance Coordinator
Jay Arbey	TADS Needs Assessor
Alan Adams	Project Director (Year One)
Sandy Dawes	Project Coordinator/Teacher of Infants
Linda Voland	Project Director (Year Two)
Bill Anderson	Case Study Observer
Ken Stevens	Project Evaluator
Marilyn Green	Occupational Therapist
Anne Newton	Teacher of 2- to 4-Year-Olds
Eloise Jacobs	School Principal
Jean Sellers	School Administrative Staff Member
Sue Wilson	Teacher of 3- to 5-Year-Olds
Margaret Martin	Teacher of Infants
Janice Bloom	Aide/Busdriver
Travis Morgan	TADS Staff Member
Carol Turner	TADS Staff Member
Hursel Conway	TADS Evaluation Specialist
Donald Minton	Technical Assistance Consultant
Marti Brown	Technical Assistance Consultant
Terry Price	Technical Assistance Consultant
Arthur Andrews	Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mary Smith	TADS Evaluation Specialist
Susan Sweeney	OSE Staff Member

Prologue: A New Beginning

Bob Mitchell never could decide whether he liked Chapel Hill better in the spring or fall. Spring brought feelings of new beginnings everywhere, he thought, but Chapel Hill was special in the fall, when the crisp autumn air resounded with eager cries of greeting from students and faculty as they returned from vacation. Walking from the parking lot to his TADS office, Bob reflected that today would be a "new beginning" for him, too. He planned to spend the morning reviewing the Project Co-Op files. Jay Arbey, who was TADS technical assistance coordinator for the project last year, had been appointed to another position at TADS, and Bob was to be this year's coordinator. Bob was pleased that Jay would be needs assessor for Project Co-Op this year; it would be interesting to have the needs assessment conducted by someone who had already had such close contact with the project.

Refreshed from his brisk walk, Bob sat at his desk and took up the first of the many files to be read. He already knew that Project Co-Op was a Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP) designed to serve severely and profoundly handicapped children between the ages of birth and five years, and their parents. Project Co-Op was entering its second year of operation as a joint undertaking of a county school district and a nearby college. The college was recipient of the grant, and the center-based part of the program was located at the district's Oak Ridge School. Project staff reflected the dual sponsorship. Alan Adams (the project director), two teachers of infants (including one who served as project coordinator), the occupational therapist, and the project evaluator were employed through the college; the teachers of 2- to

4- and 3- to 5-year-old children were employed by the school system, as was a teaching aide.

Now, as he read the files, Bob noted that Project Co-Op seemed to have experienced many of the joys and frustrations felt by programs of similar nature during their first year of operation. On the one hand, the design and development of services for children and parents had progressed at a very satisfactory rate; on the other hand, the project's newness had resulted in some staff communication problems. This had led to self-questioning on the part of some staff members about their ability to do as good a job as they thought they should. Later in the year, however, many of the uncertainties seemed to have disappeared as staff gained more confidence.

In some ways, thought Bob, TADS' technical assistance involvement appeared to parallel the developmental pattern of the project. Early staff communication problems had been an issue during the needs assessment; in fact, Alan Adams had subsequently expressed the feeling that the needs assessment had itself contributed to the problems. Still, a technical assistance Memorandum of Agreement had been developed; and the relationship between TADS and the project, as represented by Jay Arbey and Alan Adams, had strengthened during the year.

Bob reviewed the first year's Memorandum of Agreement. The needs listed in the Agreement were:

Priority 1: Assistance in planning for the movement of project classrooms for severely/profoundly handicapped students to a less restrictive environment, e.g. regular public school facilities

Priority 2: Assistance in developing a coherent curriculum for the program

Priority 3: Assistance in assessing and providing for the prespeech, language stimulation, and feeding needs of low-functioning children

Priority 4: Assistance in identifying instruments for the summative assessment of young severely/profoundly handicapped students

Priority 5: Assistance in measuring parent satisfaction with services provided to their children by Project Co-Op

Keeping the five needs in mind as he read the evaluations and the first year's case study report, Bob concluded that for the most part, the technical assistance activities had been carried out as they were listed in the agreement. The last activity to be completed had been a workshop on curriculum development and the conducting of evaluations in July. This activity had been well received, and the response of project staff indicated that the information had been of considerable value to them.

Project Co-Op appeared to be entering its second year with positive feelings about the assistance TADS could offer. There would be major changes among project staff, however. Bob had learned recently that Alan Adams had accepted a faculty appointment at another university and would be leaving the project in December. Linda Voland had been appointed to replace Alan as of January 1, and she would be participating actively in the needs assessment. Jean Sellers, who had been project coordinator, had moved into a full-time position with the school system's administrative staff. Sandy Dawes, a teacher of infants in the project, was now serving as project coordinator and would have an important part in the needs assessment. It was, indeed, a "new beginning," with Linda Voland, Sandy Dawes, Jay Arbey, and Bob Mitchell all assuming new roles with Project Co-Op.

The Needs Assessment

Day One

It was mid-November--almost one year to the week since the first needs assessment--when Jay Arbey, TADS needs assessor, and Bill Anderson, TADS case study observer, arrived at Project Co-Op for the second-year assessment. The night before, Jay and Bill had met with Alan Adams, the project director, to plan for the activity. Alan had described the personnel changes that had occurred since last summer. Linda Voland, an early childhood specialist, was already a member of the college faculty and had some familiarity with Project Co-Op which would be of considerable help to her when she assumed Alan's role as project director on January 1. Marilyn Green had replaced Martha Bryson as occupational therapist. Margaret Martin had come to Project Co-Op from an academic setting some distance away to replace Cynthia Lee as a teacher of infants. The other teacher of infants, Sandy Dawes, was now also serving as project coordinator. Alan reviewed for Jay and Bill the transition process and his schedule for completing the transfer of his project director's duties to Linda Voland. He also noted that Joint Dissemination Review Panel (JDRP) approval was still a top priority for the project; an agreement had been reached for Alan to visit the project as consultant from time to time to assist in preparation for JDRP review.

This morning, Sandy Dawes, the project coordinator, arrived at the hotel to drive Jay and Bill to Oak Ridge School where the project classrooms were located. Jay was glad to have a chance to chat informally with Sandy about recent events. Sandy described new personnel and new problems, but new progress as well. A decision to form a parent-support group had been made; its impetus was the death of two children who had been enrolled in the project. Sandy hoped that the group could help parents develop a responsiveness to problems affecting one another.

It was breakfast time when the three arrived at Oak Ridge School, and the children and staff were gathered in the cafeteria. Sandy introduced Jay to the staff, and Jay spent several minutes with each of them in general conversation about the children present, as he unobtrusively distributed copies of his agenda for the needs assessment. Sandy then led Jay and Bill to the conference room where the sessions were to be held. Jay knew that this year, as last, it would be necessary to meet with staff members individually or in small groups to conduct the needs assessment, but his advance knowledge had permitted him to plan accordingly. The challenge of fostering accurate and positive communication among the various Project Co-Op staff was the main reason Jay had sought this assignment. He was confident that his knowledge of the project, relationship with Alan Adams, and facilitative skills would prevent the kind of difficulties experienced in the previous year's needs assessment.

The first staff member to be interviewed was Ken Stevens, the project evaluator. At Jay's request, Ken explained thoroughly the project evaluation plan and its evolution, and he outlined the operation of the multiple baseline data system. Jay was supportive and asked frequent questions about the data system, reviewing Ken's responses until he was sure he understood. Ken noted his dual responsibilities in evaluation and bookkeeping, and analyzed the level of effort required for both. As bookkeeper, he was responsible for recording all of the project's financial transactions; this in itself was a time-consuming job for a graduate student who was employed part-time by the project. His evaluation duties were closely connected with the potential JDRP review; he would be asked to provide a careful analysis of all data on parents and children. As he reflected on this, Ken thought he could use some technical assistance in the area of data collection and management. Jay commented that any needs coming out of their talk would be considered with all of the needs emerging from conversations with other staff. He noted that in the final analysis, priorities would have to be assigned, but Ken's stated need would certainly receive equal consideration. The two then moved on to a review of the program evaluation sections of the needs assessment document (see Appendix A) and rated each item in turn. The atmosphere was relaxed and the process was straightforward. Throughout, Jay offered Ken opportunities to expand on his answers, and as they concluded he asked if Ken would like to brainstorm further. Ken said he believed all his comments and observations had been made.

Next on Jay's agenda was a series of brief visits to each classroom. He took this time to chat informally with the teachers and aides about their work and about potential technical assistance needs. The staff reported that they felt comfortable with their progress and could identify no specific needs.

Following the classroom visits, Jay returned to the conference room to find that Alan Adams and Linda Voland had just arrived from the college. After introductions, Jay and Bill described Bill's role as TADS case study observer. Both wanted to be sure that Linda, as project director-designate, understood Bill would be reporting only discussions relating directly to the process of needs assessment.

At this point, Sandy Dawes, the project coordinator, joined the group. Jay turned the conversation to the business at hand by reviewing his proposed agenda. He talked with Sandy and Linda about project goals and objectives, especially as they related to technical assistance needs. Sandy said she believed they were pretty much on schedule with respect to meeting project goals. Linda, while making contributions from time to time, deferred to Sandy for answers to Jay's questions about specific project details. Alan contributed to the conversation in some detail, especially on the topics of staff capabilities, implementation of the data system, and relationships with the public school system. Jay provided "gentle direction" as he kept the discussion focused on technical assistance needs.

This meeting of key staff members apparently marked their first opportunity to discuss the entire scope of the project, and they were all eager participants. In fact, Alan and Jay had timed the needs assessment to provide assistance to Linda as she prepared to assume the director's position. Alan and Jay saw two advantages. First, the needs assessment would provide an opportunity for transmitting decision-making authority from Alan to Linda. Alan and Jay had agreed that Linda's understanding of project needs and priorities would determine the year's technical assistance. While agreeing in principle to these goals, Jay was aware that transitions are seldom easy and that his role as facilitator might well require extra sensitivity to the needs and feelings of the personalities involved. As the session ended and Alan and Linda returned to the college to attend to academic duties, Jay reflected with pleasure that the first meeting seemed to have gone well.

After lunch, Jay had a lengthy conversation with Sandy Dawes. They reviewed some of the project goals in further detail, especially those relating to outcomes and to publishing project materials. Jay encouraged Sandy to talk of her feelings, as project coordinator, about the transition of project leadership that was soon to occur. Sandy said she would miss Alan's dynamic leadership but she had great respect for Linda's professional talents and had good feelings about the project and staff in general. She was looking ahead in a positive way.

At 3 o'clock Jay's schedule called for an interview with Marilyn Green, the project's new occupational therapist. Marilyn began by saying she was still in the process of learning. At first she questioned the data-collection requirements of the job, but she had become accustomed to the task and had come to realize that the data not only helped her to do her job but helped parents and teachers as well. Jay encouraged Marilyn to share her feelings with other staff members. Marilyn was not sure she understood how her work as occupational therapist fit into the overall project curriculum. Jay noted that her concerns, along with those of other staff, would be considered as the technical assistance agreement took shape.

Beginning about 3:30 and for the remainder of the afternoon, Jay talked with Alan, who had just returned from the college, and Sandy. Jay described the needs expressed by other staff and elicited additional comments from Alan and Sandy. During their far-ranging discussion, questions were raised about passing along to new staff members the knowledge others had acquired from last year's technical assistance. Underlying the entire discussion was the issue of project continuation after the three-year demonstration funding ended.

Summarizing their discussion, the group agreed that the project's needs appeared to fall into three general categories:

1. Data handling; more precisely, the development of a format for storing collected data
2. Staff development; especially for new staff, and in preparation for JDRP review
3. Project continuation; especially in two areas, the continuation of services to children and parents for children who would no longer be eligible for project assistance, and the continuation of the project as a model for service delivery

After they had reviewed, revised, and clarified for themselves the needs that had been expressed, Jay said he would look over the material he had obtained and would prepare more formal statements for use the next day.

Day Two

The first item on Jay's agenda this morning was a conversation with Anne Newton, one of the preschool teachers whom he had not yet had an opportunity to interview in depth. Anne noted that project plans called for preschool teachers to work occasionally in the infant classroom, a cause of concern for her since her prior experience had been with older children. Jay listened carefully, and took notes on Anne's discussion of her staff development needs.

Jay's next appointment was with Eloise Jacobs, the school principal. In beginning this meeting, Jay asked "What would you do, if you were in Linda's or Sandy's place, about project continuation?" Eloise expressed concern over her limited involvement with the project, especially since Project Co-Op was housed in the school for which she was responsible. She wanted to offer her teaching and administrative expertise to the project so that she could become an ally in its continuation effort. Eloise believed that recently scheduled monthly meetings with Sandy Dawes had helped put school-project relations on a more positive footing. Jay asked if he might share her concerns with Linda Voland, the project's director-designate, and Eloise consented.

Having spoken her mind, Eloise said that she had positive feelings about continuing the project, and she hoped that in making continuation plans, the project staff would work with her to incorporate their program as an integral part of the school's operation. Midway through their conversation, Jay and Eloise were joined by Jean Sellers, who had served as project coordinator the previous year. Jean suggested that the school administration's main concern about continuation would be its cost. She thought the project should prepare a detailed cost analysis of the program components that had been supported by project funds. Throughout their discussion, both Eloise and Jean expressed the hope that means could be found to continue the project when federal funding ended.

Linda Voland arrived as Jay concluded his meeting with Eloise and Jean. Jay was glad to have a few minutes to speak privately with the director-designate, and to ask her about her feelings concerning the transition and the project in general. Her principal concern, Linda said, was the impact of staff turnover on the project's success. There had already been some key staff changes, and she was very much concerned that several other staff members were at a point where a career change might be expected. Then Jay reported to Linda on his meeting with Eloise and Jean. He indicated that there appeared to be an opportunity to develop a better working relationship, noting that Sandy had already initiated regular meetings with Eloise. Jay and Linda explore additional strategies that might help Eloise to be part of the project team.

Sandy Dawes arrived as Jay and Linda were reviewing the needs expressed by project staff. The three proceeded to work on completing the technical assistance agreement form. Alan Adams entered the conference room while they were working but left in a few minutes, and the new project director, the coordinator, and the needs assessor continued the process of making decisions about technical assistance for the year.

After reviewing all of the needs expressed by staff members, the three agreed to limit their discussion to four items of technical assistance:

1. Assistance in planning for continuation of services to children and parents when federal funding ended
2. Assistance in preparing a cost analysis, with emphasis on the component dealing with infants and their parents
3. Assistance in developing a format for data management, i.e., student data and parent progress data
4. Assistance in sending selected staff to a JDRP workshop

During formulation of the still tentative technical assistance agreement, Jay's experience as a TADS coordinator proved especially helpful. He was able to keep a running estimate of the costs and to let the others know whether their requests were likely to be within available resources.

By this time it was early afternoon, and Sandy and Linda needed time to attend to project business. Jay revisited other staff in their classrooms, and talked individually with Anne Newton and Sue Wilson (preschool teachers), Margaret Martin (teacher of infants), and Janice Bloom, who had joined the staff in the fall as an aide/busdriver. Their discussions, focusing on Jay's previous meetings with them, confirmed that their needs had been reported accurately.

After the children left for the day, the entire staff gathered in the conference room to review the two days' work. Jay reported, for Linda and Sandy, the results of his meetings with individual staff members, in each case asking the staff member's permission to report the conversation and confirmation that his report was accurate. Jay also sought confirmation from Linda and Sandy that individual staff needs had indeed been noted. Some problem solving around individual needs occurred at this time.

Jay had several reasons for his careful and thorough discussion of staff members' needs. First, he believed that the previous year's conflict during the needs assessment had been due in large part to competition between line staff and administration for limited technical assistance resources. Although he sensed that the conflict was not present this year, he believed a fair hearing of each person's needs would help minimize conflict during the project's transition period. Second, he knew that the new agreement would almost exclusively serve administrative needs, and he wanted to demonstrate TADS' concern for line staff needs as well. Third, he believed that resolution of individual needs would improve overall project functioning and morale.

Returning to the proposed agreement, Jay noted that the project's leaders had needed to make decisions about priorities. He then went over each item in the tentative agreement and asked for feedback. The staff appeared to be comfortable with the decisions that had been made, and several volunteered to participate in various project activities such as continuation and evaluation. Jay concluded the session by expressing his appreciation for the reception he had been given, and he congratulated the staff collectively for their fine work.

The final meeting of the needs assessment was a brief session Jay held with Linda, Sandy, and Alan who had just returned from the college. Jay reviewed with them the total needs assessment and affirmed their understanding of the final make-up of the technical assistance agreement.

During their return trip to Chapel Hill, Jay told Bill Anderson, the case study observer, that he felt the needs assessment had gone well. He believed the tentative agreement reflected the true needs of the project, and although it did not address individual staff needs directly, he believed the administrative staff were alerted to the needs and would deal with them in a planned way.

Interlude

It was early in December, and TADS staff members were assembling in the conference room where they were to discuss Project Co-Op's Memorandum of Agreement for technical assistance. Bob Mitchell, TADS technical assistance coordinator for Project Co-Op, had met with Jay Arbey the day before, and he felt he was well prepared to participate in the discussion. The group talked of the needs outlined in the tentative agreement presented by Jay. The needs appeared to be straightforward, and TADS staff members were glad that resources were available to support all of the stated needs.

The following priorities would be incorporated into a Memorandum of Agreement:

Priority 1: Assistance in planning for continuation of project services to severely/profoundly handicapped children and their parents by the public schools

Priority 2: Assistance in determining the costs of the project's services to children and services to parents

Priority 3: Assistance in developing a management system for project data

Priority 4: Assistance in obtaining information about the JDRP process

Bob suggested that Marti Brown be considered as consultant for project continuation, Priority 1. Marti had led a similar project several years ago; that project not only had been continued but was still growing and prospering. She was now a full-time teaching and research professor in the northeast, but she maintained regular advisory contact with the project she had started.

The group decided that TADS staff member Travis Morgan would be an excellent choice of consultant for Priority 2, cost analysis. Travis had performed this function for a number of HCEEP projects in the past. Jay Arbey reported that he had already mailed to Linda Voland copies of three articles on cost analysis of HCEEP projects, one of the activities listed under Priority 2. The articles would be useful as background material for the consultation.

Concerning Priority 3, setting up a data management system, the group discussed a number of possible consultants. Donald Minton, a university faculty member from the same state who was well known in the field of program evaluation, was suggested as an excellent resource. Hursel Conway and Bob Mitchell agreed to discuss this consultation further at a later time. Priority 4, learning about the JDRP process, was to be met by supporting the costs of one project staff member to attend a small group workshop on JDRP.

During the next two days, Bob Mitchell prepared the Memorandum of Agreement, obtained the necessary TADS signatures, and mailed the agreement to Linda Voland for project approval. About a month later, after the holidays were over, Bob received the signed agreement from Linda together with the preparation forms for two of the priorities, assistance in planning for continuation of services (Priority 1) and assistance in developing a data management system (Priority 3). After discussing the Priority 3 preparation form with Hursel Conway, TADS evaluation specialist, Bob agreed to call Linda to clarify some of her responses on the form before final selection of the consultant to assist the project in developing the data management system.

A couple of days later, Bob met again with Hursel Conway and with TADS staff members Travis Morgan, Carol Turner, and Jay Arbey concerning project continuation. Jay reported in some detail on the way in which the need had come to be expressed during the needs assessment. The group discussed the desirability of suggesting to the project that a public school representative be invited to participate in the consultation, since the project, if it were to continue, would do so under the aegis of the public school system. The names of several consultants were suggested by Travis, Carol, and Hursel to be added to the one Bob himself had suggested. Jay stated his opinion that the consultant should be someone who was familiar with the type of setting in which Project Co-Op operated. He pointed out that the project administrative staff were concerned that seeking continuation funding should not in any way detract from the good relationship they were trying to develop with the school system.

Since the travel costs of sending consultants to Project Co-Op could be relatively high for Priorities 1 and 3, the group agreed that the two should be considered concurrently. That is, if a consultant for one activity could be located fairly close at hand, it would be possible to look farther afield for someone to help with the other.

About ten days later, Bob received a call from Linda Voland concerning possible dates for consultations on Priorities 1 and 3. Bob and Linda agreed that the preferred dates would be mid-February for data management and mid-March for project continuation. Over the next several days Bob talked with both Linda Voland and Marti Brown concerning Marti's serving as consultant for project continuation. Dates for the consultation were confirmed, and arrangements were made for the two to communicate with each other directly. Bob also arranged for Donald

Minton to talk directly with Linda about the data management consultation. Linda reported the results of that conversation a couple of weeks later. She had met with Don and with Terry Price, whom Don had suggested as the consultant. Since Terry's participation was agreeable to both Terry and Linda, Bob asked Linda to make the logistical arrangements directly with Terry and to let Bob know when the consultation date was set. Two weeks later, Linda called Bob to say that Terry would arrive at Project Co-Op the next day. Linda had just remembered that she had neglected to notify Bob of the arrangements she had made. After her call, Bob immediately called Terry to confirm the consultation arrangements and to obtain Terry's permission to participate in the case study.

Now, thought Bob as he signed the letter of confirmation to Terry, all of his arrangements were complete for the project continuation and data management technical assistance. Arrangements for cost analysis and JDRP could come later.

On-Site Consultation: Project Continuation

Day One

Marti Brown looked forward to her two-day visit to Project Co-Op; the project was in a position she remembered well. Midway through their funding cycle, Marti and her staff had faced a similar need to reach some early decisions about project continuation. Yesterday Marti had discussed with Sandy Dawes, Project Co-Op's coordinator and a teacher of infants, a proposed agenda she had received from Linda Voland, the project director. Marti had suggested some changes, principally to minimize the time she would spend in individual meetings with project staff. She was afraid that program concerns, curriculum, and the like would become the focus of individual conversations and, although those were topics she would like to talk about, her purpose in visiting the project was somewhat different. She hoped she would be able to focus staff discussions on a series of questions:

> What is meant by continuation of Project Co-Op, and what are its parameters?
>
> Does continuation mean brining a new philosophy to the schools? Does it mean staff employment? Curriculum materials? Some of each?

The early part of Marti's agenda called for meetings with staff in small groups and individually, if necessary. These meetings would provide Marti with detailed information about all aspects of project operations. She wanted to create an accurate picture of the components so she could help the staff, especially Linda and Sandy, formulate approaches to continuation that would have the best chance of success.

The first session began shortly after 9 o'clock in the conference room where Marti met with Margaret Martin (teacher of infants), Marilyn Green (occupational therapist), and Sandy Dawes (teacher of infants and project coordinator). The positions occupied by these three, together with half of Linda Voland's time as project director, represented the bulk of the positions funded by HCEEP and, therefore, the portion of the program for which continuation funding was needed. For several minutes Marti asked and received answers to questions about where the project children came from, how many (especially infants) were enrolled, what days of the week they came to Oak Ridge School, how groups of children differed, what staff members held what project responsibilities, and what additional services (e.g., speech and language therapy, social services) were available. Marti also asked how the staff dealt with parents of project children and with labels, such as "retarded," that were often heard applied to such children.

Jean Sellers, former project coordinator and now a member of the school system's administrative staff, joined the group at 9:30, bringing with her a graduate student intern attached to her office. Marti quickly brought Jean into the conversation by asking about the overall management of handicapped children in the school system. Jean described the placement of children with different handicaps at different school sites. In response to Marti's questions, she traced how the children were cared for and where. She pointed out that school eligibility rules did not apply to the birth to 2-year-old population, and noted that Public Health was the agency mandated to serve these very young children. As Jean responded to Marti's questions, Marti sketched out a profile in schematic form of the ways children were served in the community.

When Margaret Martin and Marilyn Green returned to their classrooms at 9:45, Marti continued her discussion with Jean about possible sources of continuation funds. She described her experiences in the project she directed, and told of how personnel had looked carefully at their approach and what they were doing in preparing to continue beyond the demonstration period. Jean noted that historically the public schools had always picked up specially funded projects, but the system was now facing an economic situation that made it necessary for Project Co-Op to have the type of help Marti was providing. Their discussion continued for another half an hour, with occasional comments from Sandy about what might be possible with respect to continuation and the attendant ramifications.

Linda Voland joined the meeting, as Sandy left briefly to see if parents had arrived for a special session of the support group. Marti continued to review her own experiences, and pointed out that the principal question her staff had asked was "What is quality service, and how is it distinguished from quantitative measures?" Marti suggested this was a question for Project Co-Op to pursue as well.

At 10:40, all of the members of the parent support group had arrived for their meeting. Before the staff left, Marti was introduced and gave a brief talk, encouraging the parents to participate in influencing continuation of the project.

After visiting momentarily in the infant class, Marti, Linda, and Sandy moved to the project office to continue their discussion, including some minor changes to the agenda. Linda was anxious for the rest of the staff to hear from Marti about the project she had directed, and they agreed to agenda changes making that possible.

The three continued their discussion for the rest of the morning. First, Marti reviewed what she sensed to be the realities of the situation, what the real costs were, and what it would be reasonable to expect the school system to absorb. Once again she asked what was meant by continuation. Linda's and Sandy's responses were in terms of people; what staff members would need to be picked up for the project to continue. Marti also asked in a rhetorical sense how the model could be continued. She noted the similarity between her experience and Project Co-Op's with respect to what had to be picked up, and reminded them of Jean's statement on the history of continuing projects locally. They all agreed that the climate underscored by the current economic situation was different from the circumstances present when the project had been planned two years before. They concluded the morning session with a consideration of political strategies that might be workable and strategies that might make project continuation possible without additional funding from the school system.

After lunch, Marti, Linda, and Sandy began their afternoon session by reviewing the services to children and parents already provided by the school system and those added as a result of the project's work. They began to explore strategies for describing project activities in comparison to the activities already provided by the school system. Marti guided the discussion by asking questions that would compare project activities with those of the school system. She also asked how Jean Sellers and her skills could be brought into a closer working relationship with the project. Lengthy consideration also was given to the make-up of the advisory council and how that group could be enlisted to help with continuation. From time to time, Marti stopped the discussion to review where they were in their thinking and which approaches might best influence the school board and administration.

The afternoon's discussion concluded with an exploration of additional alternatives for project continuation, both funding and administrative considerations. For example, the possibility was mentioned that EPSDT funds might be available, and that some of Sandy's coordination duties might be gradually shifted to Eloise Jacobs, the school principal, during the last year of the project.

That evening, Marti attended a meeting of the project's advisory council. She was introduced by Linda Voland to the group which consisted of a parent, a representative from the State Department of Education, and a physician. Project staff attending included Margaret Martin (teacher of infants), Marilyn Green (occupational therapist), Linda Voland (project director), Sandy Dawes (teacher of infants and project coordinator), and Eloise Jacobs (principal of Oak Ridge School). Linda outlined for the group the purpose of Marti's visit and the anticipated outcomes. In a brief presentation, Marti reviewed what she considered to be the importance of constituent groups such as parents and advisory councils. She suggested a number of strategies the council might adopt. The group became animated over the possibility of additional funds from the state that the Department of Education representative reported might be available to assist in continuation. This was new information for all of them. The remainder of the meeting consisted of a wide-ranging question and answer period in which all participated.

Day Two

Marti met at 8 a.m. with project coordinator/teacher of infants Sandy Dawes, teachers Sue Wilson, Anne Newton, and Margaret Martin, and occupational therapist Marilyn Green. During the hour-long session, Marti described at length the project she had directed, including the setting, the children and parents involved, and the curriculum approaches. She illustrated her comments with case examples and answered numerous questions from the staff.

After the staff left for their daily classroom duties, Marti met with Eloise Jacobs. The two reviewed the advisory council session and discussed approaches to continuation. Eloise noted that she had never before had to be political in seeking continuation of projects, and expressed some concerns about that role. Eloise then led the discussion into consideration of the concept of least restrictive environment (LRE) for handicapped children. She felt that all was being done that could be for most of the children attending her school. She supported the LRE concept, however, and had ideas about how it could be accomplished better. Marti and Eloise exchanged thoughts about the possible consequences of LRE and Marti suggested strategies that might overcome Eloise's reservations. Marti attempted to shift the discussion to the political strategies required for continuation, but Eloise wanted to pursue LRE further. Eloise noted there was a need to address the issue of school staff's feeling they were the only ones who could deal with "their" children. She thought this was a largely unconscious effort of staff to "protect" the children, but it was an issue that required resolution before further LRE could take place. During this conversation, Eloise asked Marti for a rationale concerning programming for birth to 6-year-olds in LRE settings.

Jean Sellers joined them at 10 o'clock and Marti suggested it might be possible throughout the school system to pursue LRE first with severely and profoundly handicapped children. Jean said she didn't think principals would accept the idea, and noted that state regulations were somewhat passive; if parents wanted LRE for their children, the children could leave a center-based program for integrated classes and openings had to be provided. Midway in the discussion, Eloise left to attend to other duties.

Linda Voland, the project director, joined Marti and Jean at 10:30, and introduced Arthur Andrews, the school system's assistant superintendent for special education who was Jean's immediate supervisor. Replying to questions from Arthur and Jean, Marti reported informally on elements of her project. At Linda's request, she discussed a study on the length of instruction time actually provided in 2½-hour, 4-hour, and 6-hour programs. The study had revealed that the actual amount of instructional time remained about the same for all of the programs. There followed a lengthy discussion about funding and cost-per-child issues. Marti reported the statement of the representative from the State Department of Education concerning possible state funds. Both Arthur and Jean were surprised and questioned the accuracy of the statement, since neither had heard about it before. Comments were made about what might be possible for continuing Project Co-Op in relation to other established projects within the school system.

Marti shifted the discussion to the LRE issue, offering suggestions on how to break down barriers to more positive thinking. She included comments that led to a brief exploration of values related to LRE. Through asking direct questions concerning the issue, Jean shifted the discussion to the problem of project continuation. Alternative locations for the program were considered. On the subject of private funds, Arthur reported that the school system already used private funds for some programs, including special education projects. Throughout the remainder of the morning session, Marti was particularly supportive of the efforts taking place, while at the same time keeping gentle pressure on for more creative thinking on the subject of continuation.

Following a break for lunch, Linda, Sandy, and Marti reviewed the discussions that had taken place over the course of the consultation, with Marti focusing the conversation on five major issues she had identified:

1. The need for project staff to define their concept of continuation more precisely. The question remained, continuation of what?
2. The need to develop a plan for involving the school system's administration in preparing a process for transition of children, in establishing intake procedures, and in standardizing project staff roles in relationship to the rest of the system.
3. The need to establish the number of children to be planned for under the continuation, so that decisions could be made about what model adaptations were possible.
4. The need to define the role and make-up of the advisory council.
5. The need to identify local, state, and private funding sources that might be tapped for support of project continuation.

As a result of the two days' discussions, Marti had charted the administrative structure of the school system, and using that as a guide, she raised questions with Linda and Sandy about which administrative or program element in the school system they wished to identify with in the future. She pointed out the parameters surrounding project continuation for both the birth to 2-year-olds and the 2- to 6-year-old group. The parameters included service level and intensity, staff (who and how many), philosophy, and model (including curriculum, data collection, criteria for students, and parent involvement). Marti emphasized the importance of deciding what was acceptable and what wasn't with respect to the parameters. She also cautioned about power issues that might arise when the transition from the project's present status as a demonstration program to an ongoing school-system service took place.

Marti gave Linda and Sandy an opportunity to review other issues that had come up during the consultation, and suggested that they identify both restraining and facilitating forces that might act upon their ability to move the project forward as they wanted. The discussion concluded with a look at the time frame required for completing various tasks and making needed decisions relative to project continuation, including deadlines that would need to be imposed. The group parted with expressions of appreciation for the consultation.

On the drive to the airport, Marti reflected on the events of the two days. She was generally satisfied with the sessions and was encouraged by the dedication and competence of project staff. She hoped that what she had offered would be useful. She gave some thought to whether she should have been more directive in helping staff develop a point-by-point plan of action. After further consideration, however, she believed her conscious decision had been correct, to go only as far as helping the group structure alternatives and raising questions that needed to be addressed. With the background they had now, the staff members themselves were equipped to develop their own approach to the problems of project continuation.

On-Site Consultation: Data Management

Bob Mitchell was reviewing his notes on Project Co-Op's data management consultation. Bill Anderson, the case study observer, had not been able to observe the data management consultation, and Bob was to meet with Bill in a few minutes to brief him on the project's technical assistance for this need.

Terry Price had reported to Bob that he met with Ken Stevens, the project evaluator, for one day in February to review the types of data that had been collected by the project over the past year and a half. Terry had found there was considerable information available, and he left the first meeting with copies of project forms containing baseline data, intervention data, and follow-up data for both the children's and parents' involvement components of the project. Over the next few weeks, Terry had developed a format for summarizing the daily child and parent record data in a consistent manner. He had also prepared suggestions for statistical procedures to be used in analyzing the data, and had illustrated the procedures with dummy data.

On April 9th, about six weeks after their first meeting, Terry had spent a second day with Ken going over his recommendations. Terry also reported that he had a later telephone conversation with Ken concerning some detailed applications of the statistical procedures. He expected to follow up later to see if further assistance was needed.

This was the first time Terry had served as a TADS consultant, and his reaction was quite favorable. He was complimentary about his contacts with TADS, and expressed the opinion that TADS had done a good job of following through with its responsibilities to him as consultant.

Interlude

The Project Co-Op consultations on project continuation and data management had been concluded, and Bob Mitchell (TADS technical assistance coordinator for the project) noted with satisfaction that both consultations appeared to have been successful. Comments on Linda Voland's (project director) evaluation forms indicated there had been a good match between the consultants and the project in both cases. The consultants seemed to have truly understood the needs they were asked to address. The project's perceptions of the degree of success generally matched the opinions expressed by both consultants, Marti Brown and Terry Price. To be sure, both the consultants and the project director had expressed some concerns about "unfinished business," but Bob recognized these observations as healthy professional discontent about never quite reaching 100% of the goals individuals set for themselves.

With those two consultations behind, Bob set his focus on making the necessary arrangements for technical assistance to meet the two remaining needs set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement: cost analysis and preparation for JDRP review. Initial plans had called for the two-day cost analysis consultation to take place in early March, but Linda and Bob subsequently had agreed to delay the session because of its close proximity to the consultations on project continuation and data management. The cost analysis consultation was delayed until May 20th and was changed to a one-day session.

Now it was early April, and Bob met with Hursel Conway (TADS evaluation specialist) to discuss options for meeting the JDRP need. The original plan had been for a project staff member to participate in a small group meeting with persons from other projects with a similar need. However, there were no other HCEEP projects interested in such a meeting this year, and it appeared to both Hursel and Bob that two alternatives could be offered to Project Co-Op. One was to arrange an individual session to observe the Panel, with one or two TADS evaluation specialists and a representative of the Office of Special Education (OSE). The other alternative was to provide written information that the project staff could use as background material to begin learning about JDRP.

In a phone call to Linda Voland, Bob learned that the project was still very interested in JDRP and wished to attend a Panel session if possible. Working with two TADS evaluation specialists, Hursel Conway and Mary Smith, Bob now made arrangements for Hursel and Mary to meet in Washington, D.C. with Linda Voland (project director), Sandy Dawes (project coordinator), and Ken Stevens (project evaluator). These TADS and project personnel would observe a JDRP Panel in progress and talk about the process in more detail. They would also meet with Susan Sweeney of OSE. A date was set in early summer for the D.C. meeting, and Bob and Hursel agreed to divide responsibilities for making arrangements for the trip and the consultation.

On-Site Consultation: Cost Analysis

It was early June, three weeks after Travis Morgan's visit to Project Co-Op, and Travis was describing his cost analysis consultation for Bill Anderson, the case study observer. Travis reported that he had called Linda Voland two weeks before the consultation to discuss the nature of the technical assistance need. Linda said she had read the articles Jay sent her in December but would have to read them again because they had become "cold." The two also discussed several matters relating to the development of a cost analysis, including identification of the audience to receive the information (the local school system personnel would be principal recipients), the most logical way to break down project components for analysis, and a summary of available data that could help in the analysis.

Although this had been his first visit to Project Co-Op, Travis had read the first year's case study report and, as a result, felt he probably knew more about this project than many others he had visited. The knowledge had no appreciable effect on the consultation, he reported, but overall his prior knowledge probably was an advantage, particularly during the more generalized conversations that took place with staff members during the day.

Travis said he had assumed the visit would be similar to other consultations on the same topic, and so he had shared a topical agenda with the staff. He soon realized, however, that the agenda would not be followed. Initially, rather than dealing with development of a cost analysis system, the discussion became an extension of Marti Brown's project continuation consultation. The entire morning focused on strategies for approaching the school system about continuation. Staff concern focused on the infant program component. This was understandable, since the preschool component was already supported by the public schools.

The afternoon discussion had centered on organizing a continuation plan. During this time, Travis noted, feelings were expressed by staff about the integrity of continuation--what were felt to be the minimum elements required for project goals to be sustained. Travis sensed that there was staff willingness to consider altering the program so that it became entirely a home-based effort. Parent involvement, perhaps the most important feature of Project Co-Op, could then be continued in substance.

Travis reported to Bill that the discussions resulted in his making several recommendations. The first concerned the need for staff to conceptualize alternatives for continuing the infant program so they could judge what would be feasible from both programmatic and cost perspectives. Acceptable options could then be presented for school system consideration. A second recommendation was to identify additional funding sources which could be shown together with the alternative plans. Third, project staff should propose retaining the coordinator's role, at least until the infant program was well established. His fourth recommendation involved demonstrating cost effectiveness of the infant program in specific ways. Fifth, he recommended that staff consider proposing that the schools begin supporting the infant teachers' salaries during the third year of the project, using state reimbursement funds. Finally, he suggested that the third year of demonstration funding be used to make needed changes in the infant program prior to the assumption of its support by the school system.

Travis had repeated his recommendations more formally in a follow-up letter to Linda. He also included in the letter recommendations that the project form a continuation funding task force, which could take the lead in planning and implementing a campaign for funds and which would allow the staff to remain in the background; that staff investigate budget preparation procedures and timelines for the school system's 1982-83 budget; and that Arthur Andrews, the school system's assistant superintendent for special education, be involved in the development of continuation plans.

In reviewing the visit with Bill, Travis expressed the opinion that although the technical assistance agreement's statement of the need did not appear to be an accurate statement of the project's needs at the time of the consultation, the discussions had left the staff with a structure for cost analysis. Recognizing that the content was similar to that of Marti Brown's consultation, Travis nevertheless thought that new ground had been covered. The project staff had appeared pleased and seemed to get a notion of the "nitty gritty" strategies needed for providing for continuation, along with the political dimensions involved. Travis planned to follow up his visit with a telephone call to see how things were going.

Off-Site Consultation: Preparation for JDRP Review

Hursel Conway's first telephone call on Monday morning was from Bill Anderson, case study observer for Project Co-Op. Bill was anxious to hear about the trip Hursel and Mary Smith had made to Washington the week before, when they joined Linda Voland, Sandy Dawes, and Ken Stevens in observing the Joint Dissemination Review Panel (JDRP) process. Hursel reported that prior to the JDRP session, the two TADS evaluation specialists had visited the project briefly, and then they and the three project staff members had traveled to Washington. The next morning they met with Susan Sweeney of the Office of Special Education (OSE). They had talked about some of the JDRP requirements in relation to overall project goals and had learned about potential OSE involvement with the process, should Project Co-Op decide to pursue JDRP approval.

From there, the group moved on to the JDRP meeting, where two projects were scheduled to present results of their program evaluations. In Hursel's opinion, the principal gains from attendance at the session were that Linda, Sandy, and Ken had an opportunity to see first hand how the Panel operated, to hear the kind of questions asked of projects appearing before the Panel, and to observe the types of data presented. They were able to observe how Panel members were helpful to the projects being reviewed, while at the same time insisting that the quality of the material presented meet strict standards. At the end of the JDRP session, the group met again with Susan Sweeney of OSE to discuss what they had observed.

Hursel reported that he and Mary had discussed with Linda, Sandy, and Ken what would be required for Project Co-Op to continue to work on preparing for JDRP review. Among the questions formulated by the group were:

> Are there adequate project data available?
>
> How much time will be required of staff?
>
> Which staff members could be assigned major tasks involved in preparing to submit the project for review?
>
> What additional professional help would be required?
>
> What was a realistic timeline to develop a completed submission prior to the end of the third year of project funding?

The trip to Washington, Hursel believed, had provided Project Co-Op staff members with an awareness of what was required, as well as raising a number of logistical questions related to the process. The answers to those questions would come after project staff had time to consider them when they returned home. Before answering them, however, the Co-Op staff realized a more basic question needed attention:

> What are the advantages to Project Co-Op, in the long run, of JDRP approval?

Hursel and Bill concluded their telephone conversation by agreeing that they would both look forward to hearing what decisions the project reached about seeking JDRP approval.

Interlude

The academic year was over, and Bill Anderson was interviewing Bob Mitchell, TADS coordinator, before his final visit to Project Co-Op in preparation for writing his case study report. He had read all of the evaluation reports written by project staff and consultants on the technical assistance events, and now he read the End-of-Year Survey completed by Linda Voland that Bob had just handed to him.

Linda reported that TADS had contributed a great deal to the project's progress in the four areas of technical assistance. She believed TADS' most significant positive impacts had been in the areas of project documentation and record-keeping, planning for project continuation, and financial planning. No negative impacts were indicated on the Survey. Overall, Linda rated her satisfaction with the year's technical assistance as "excellent." She concluded the Survey with the comment:

> The TADS people have been wonderfully supportive of my role in this first year and helped ease my transition into the directorship. The consultants they provided were excellent and have made a significant difference in the operation of the project. I have appreciated their role and look forward to another year of association with them.

It had been a fairly straightforward TADS/project relationship this year, said Bob. His involvement with the project had been routine. A number of TADS staff members had been assigned to provide technical assistance, in addition to two outside consultants, but Bob did not consider this unusual. The nature of the project's needs were such that the required expertise was available among TADS staff. All in all, Bob thought the project's needs had not been difficult to define, and he believed the project had received satisfactory assistance from him and from TADS. Bob was pleased that his first year of association with Project Co-Op had gone so well.

Epilogue

Bill Anderson had just arrived at Oak Ridge School for his final meeting of the year as TADS case study observer for Project Co-Op. He was greeted by Sandy Dawes, project coordinator, and Ken Stevens, project evaluator. For several minutes, Sandy and Ken chatted about their work since Bill's last visit and about some of the children and parents whom Bill had come to know over the past two years. When they met with Linda Voland, the project director, in the project office, Linda brought Bill up to date on recent project activities. Then the group turned their attention to the effects of the year's technical assistance from TADS.

Overall, their reaction was positive. There was some concern over the need to compress the four technical assistance activities into a relatively short period of time, from mid-February to mid-June. They believed it might have been better to spread the consultations over a longer period. The group suggested that an earlier date for the needs assessment might be helpful for second- and third-year projects, and Bill noted that this was in contrast to the project's belief, during the first year, that the needs assessment had come too early.

A number of actions had been taken following information or suggestions obtained from the technical assistance events. For example, Ken had been able to test the data management system developed by consultant Terry Price as part of an assignment for a graduate course he had taken during the spring semester. Ken shared with the group some of the computer print-out material already produced, and indicated that the system seemed to be working well.

Another project activity was enlargement of the advisory council. Plans had been made to assemble the group soon to define their role more explicitly. In addition, several persons had been identified to serve as members of a task force on continuation funding.

Sandy, Ken, and Linda had all attended the meeting in Washington, D.C. to observe the JDRP process. They agreed that the opportunity to observe the Panel in action was exciting. Ken was looking closely at year-end project data that had just become available. The results of the data analysis would have a great deal of influence on their decision about whether to pursue JDRP approval.

Project continuation was the major focus of technical assistance during the year, either directly or indirectly. Linda noted, however, that continuation depended in large measure on school-system decisions over which the project had little control. For example, at present the school system's administration was considering alternative uses of Oak Ridge School, such as making it an early childhood center. There had been a time in the spring when, Linda said, she had sensed feelings of ambivalence about the direction the school system wanted to take with Project Co-Op; but she believed recent feedback was much more positive, especially from Jean Sellers. In addition, Linda thought her meetings on several occasions with Arthur Andrews had been worthwhile. As assistant superintendent in charge of special education, Arthur had been able to give Linda information on preparing budgets, including schedules to be followed, and facts and figures related to methods used by the school system in estimating costs. Linda said she wouldn't have known to ask for this information had it not been for the technical assistance the project had received. She was following other recommendations by trying to determine ways to turn over some of the project's operations to the school system at an early date. One item (administrative transfer of the project's infant teachers to the school system during the third year of demonstration) had been explored; however, the length of time required by school-system procedures to make the changes meant that this could not be accomplished before the next school year began, and the idea had been dropped.

The final topic the group discussed was changes in project personnel. Sandy Dawes had been offered and had accepted a graduate fellowship at a university in another state. This was an opportunity to undertake doctoral studies that Sandy could not refuse, and she would be leaving at the end of the summer. Linda and the project staff had discussed what personnel changes would be required when Sandy left. They had agreed that Sandy's duties as project coordinator could be divided between Marilyn Green (occupational therapist) and Margaret Martin (teacher of infants). Another teacher of infants would be employed to replace Sandy's half-time teaching responsibilities, and in fact, a likely candidate had already been identified. The staff believed this arrangement would leave the project in a strong operating position for the third demonstration year. It would also facilitate the project's transition into the school system, if continuation was the decision finally reached.

As they ended their meeting, Bill thanked the group for their cooperation. He expressed his appreciation for the work they were doing and said he believed he now had all the information he needed to write his second year's report on the case study of Project Co-Op.

SECTION V

THE RESULTS: A SUMMARY OF THE "LEARNINGS"

In Section 1, four questions were listed which provided the framework for the case study and guided the observations. The questions were:

1. What client characteristics affect technical assistance?
2. What technical assistance provider characteristics affect the technical assistance?
3. What characteristics of the technical assistance events themselves influence the assistance?
4. What are the outcomes, effects, and/or impacts of technical assistance?

It is the purpose of this section to provide answers to these questions, based on the case reports, for this second year of the study.

In the first year of the study, emphasis was placed on identifying the characteristics of the clients and the consultants who provided technical assistance. For the second year, emphasis was placed on the consultants who provided technical assistance, the TADS coordinators who arranged and facilitated each technical assistance service, and the technical assistance services themselves. The intent was to obtain for each question more in-depth information which could be summarized and synthesized when the study was completed.

Before proceeding with discussion of the results, several cautions must be noted. First, the observations were confined to two projects in their second year of operation, a sample that does not permit generalization. Second, as a result of their prior experience and orientation, the observers had well-established personal values and biases which may be reflected in their reports. The same bias may have been present in those who analyzed and identified the results of the study. Third, as comprehensive as the case reports may be, they cannot represent a total picture of the projects, the consultants, or the technical assistance provided. Everything could not be observed and recorded; there are omissions in the "stories," some of which may have been critical to the process.

These cautions, indeed the very nature and purpose of case studies themselves, make it necessary to consider the results presented here as tentative. They are plausible hypotheses which may prove useful in future research.

Question 1: What Client Characteristics Affect Technical Assistance?

The results for this question appeared to cluster naturally into three categories: (a) the overall project, (b) administration, and (c) staff.

Overall Project

Many variables could be included in this category. It encompasses the context and environment in which the project operates as well as specific events, approaches, organizational structures, and communication patterns which permeate the entire project. For this year, three major variables were identified.

Major disruptions at the project. Any event or series of events which interrupts or adversely affects a program and/or its personnel also affects the technical assistance. In Project Early Start, there was a strike at the school in which the project operated. The strike affected all of the staff and resulted in many delays in project operation due to the loss of staff, the need to hire and orient new staff, and the need to rebuild working relationships and confidence. As a result, there was no opportunity for personal contact between project staff and TADS before technical assistance was provided. As will be noted in subsequent discussions, this affected the interactions between TADS and the project throughout the year. In delaying project operation, the strike also delayed technical assistance. The needs assessment was not conducted until January, which compressed the amount of time available for providing technical assistance.

Developmental status of the project. The extent to which a project is organized and operational affects the type and amount of technical assistance that is appropriate and effective. Project Early Start, because of the strike, was nearly back at the status of a first-year project when they began their second year. Evidence from the case study and comments from the project coordinator suggest that the technical assistance provided to Project Early Start was not modified appropriately for this unique situation. On the other hand, Project Co-Op, in spite of numerous changes in personnel, maintained sufficient consistency to continue smooth project development. Modifications in the needs assessment, i.e. conducting of the needs assessment by the previous TADS technical assistance coordinator, were made to ensure a smooth transfer within TADS and to enhance project development by providing a link or "bridge" between the former and new project directors.

Autonomy. The extent to which project personnel have control over decision-making and actions affecting their operation affects both the project and the technical assistance. Personnel in both Early Start and Co-Op were very concerned about securing funds to continue their programs, and they sought technical assistance to aid them in their efforts. It was not project personnel, however, but the fiscal agencies in which they were located that had final control over continuation funding decisions, and project staffs had to include in the technical assistance the administrators in the agency which had final say in continuing the project. This occurred in both cases.

Administration

Project administration appears to be a critical element in the design, conduct, and outcome of technical assistance. Several variables related to administration were identified in the cases.

Change in project leadership. In both Early Start and Co-op, project leaders left the projects after the first year and new leaders were hired. For the new project directors, there was a need to follow the former director's ideas and plans as stated in the project proposal while at the same time bringing personal ideas and styles into the situation. For example, Linda Voland, at Co-Op, spent time and the resources of technical assistance to explore the feasibility of seeking JDRP validation--a new procedure for her but a goal of the former project director. In both projects, the new leadership had limited or no experience with technical assistance. There is evidence in the case reports that when orientation to technical assistance was provided for a leader, it enhanced the technical assistance, while lack of orientation was somewhat problemmatic.

Role/responsibility differentiation. The extent to which leadership roles and responsibilities are differentiated influences both project operation and certain types of technical assistance. For example, in Project Early Start Bill Roland, who was the fiscal agency director and project director, was responsible for continuation funding. His apparent lack of direct action and vagueness about plans made Harry Newman, the project coordinator, feel responsible for this function as well. However, Harry did not have the authority to seek or secure funds for the program, but because he was closest to it he felt the greatest pressure. This dilemma caused difficulties during the technical assistance in continuation funding. On the other hand, in Project Co-Op, Alan Adams, the first-year project director who knew he was leaving, set up the second-year needs assessment to include the new director and gradually removed himself from the scene so Linda Voland could assume the leadership role. The role of the school principal, however, was not as clear and had to be resolved as the project, through technical assistance, sought continuation funding.

Understanding of project needs. Understanding of technical assistance needs, on the part of project leadership and staff, appears to be an important factor in the success of technical assistance. In most instances in both projects, technical assistance was designed to meet needs perceived to be important by project administrators and staffs, and there was evidence of support for and progress in the area of assistance. In the case of technical assistance in development of an advisory board for Project Early Start, however, the project coordinator stated at the end of the year that this had not been a real project need but, rather, one that he believed was promoted by the funding agency (OSE) and TADS. Very little progress actually was made in this aspect of project development.

Staff

Project staff, many of whom are involved in technical assistance, have a definite influence on the process. Two factors were evident in this second year of the case study.

Change in project staff. In both projects, there were key changes in project staff during the second year; in Project Early Start, in fact, most of the staff were new. Initially, new staff in both projects were unfamiliar with their roles, and this affected and became a part of discussions during technical assistance. New staff also were not familiar or oriented to technical assistance, and they relied on more experienced colleagues to make decisions about technical assistance needs and services.

Attitude toward technical assistance. In most instances, the project staffs appeared supportive of technical assistance and eager to participate. In Project Early Start, however, Helen, the project nurse, was opposed to having an external consultant come to the project. Her leadership during the needs assessment led to the selection of methods of technical assistance other than an on-site visit by an external consultant.

Summary

In this second year of the case study, it was evident that events occurring in a project, as well as presenting characteristics, affect technical assistance. These included specific events, such as changes in leadership and staff, and on-going events, such as project development and exposure to and experience with technical assistance. This finding suggests that studies of technical assistance should look not only at specific characteristics of clients at the time of the study but also at developmental, organizational, and historical factors which may influence the process or may provide useful information in interpreting results.

Question 2: What Technical Assistance Provider Characteristics Affect Technical Assistance?

One of the characteristics that distinguishes technical assistance as provided by TADS from other assistance processes is that an entire agency is involved. To understand the characteristics of the provider of technical assistance, it is therefore necessary to view the technical assistance agency itself, the persons within the agency who link and arrange technical assistance (in this instance, TADS technical assistance coordinators), and the persons who work directly with the clients (the actual providers of technical assistance). Results for this question, therefore are presented in three categories: (a) the technical assistance agency (TADS), (b) TADS technical assistance coordinators, and (c) the consultants who provided technical assistance.

The Technical Assistance Agency

Two primary aspects of the agency appeared to influence the technical assistance provided during this second year of the study: (a) the design for technical assistance (i.e., the structure and philosophy within which the technical assistance agency operated); and (b) the approach taken by agency staff in their interactions with projects.

Design for technical assistance. One aspect of the design for technical assistance which influences the process is the degree of structure which governs day-to-day operations. Evidence from the case study indicates that there is a definite structure in the way technical assistance is arranged by TADS. In almost all instances, Carol and

Bob, the TADS technical assistance coordinators for Projects Early Start and Co-Op, followed the procedures of: (a) initial contact, (b) scheduling of technical assistance, (c) preparing the project and the consultant for the technical assistance, and (d) follow-up. As a result, both technical assistance providers and project staffs knew, at least in general, what would be done and what to expect as an outcome.

There was evidence in Project Early Start that the degree of structure was perceived at times to be excessive. Harry Newman perceived TADS process to be rigid, and he felt pressured by what he viewed as deadlines which, if not met, would reflect on his performance. On the other hand, no evidence is presented for Project Co-Op that the director or staff felt pressured; in fact, the structure was used in a routine fashion to facilitate communication.

The type of staff may also influence an agency's effectiveness in providing technical assistance. In this instance, TADS appeared to be staffed by persons with noticeable content area expertise. There were several examples of TADS coordinators and other staff members knowing the content, people, and printed resources available in specific areas of need identified by client projects. TADS staff members also had specific content area skills which were used in providing direct assistance to the projects to meet their needs.

Approach to technical assistance. Another source of variability among technical assistance agencies is their approach to providing assistance to clients (Suarez, 1980; Trohanis, 1980). In these case reports, three characteristics of the TADS approach to technical assistance were identified.

There were examples which illustrated that responsiveness is a characteristic of TADS' approach to technical assistance. Schedules were set and changed in response to projects' requests. Materials were sent to projects in response to stated needs. Project staff were encouraged to call TADS if they had questions, concerns, or needs for information. Perhaps the most specific example of responsiveness was Perry Hargett's immediate response to questions of Project Early Start's staff about the needs assessment.

There was also a general tenor of supportiveness in the technical assistance. TADS staff appeared to accept the needs of the projects once they were known and provided varied resources to meet those needs. The result of these efforts was described by Linda Voland, Project Co-Op director, who stated on the End-of-Year Survey that TADS had been very supportive and helpful to her during her first year as project director.

Several examples in the case study indicated that the agency was overtly non-directive and viewed the project staff, rather than TADS or consultants, as the final decision makers regarding recommendations for providing technical assistance. In almost all instances, coordinators and consultants provided recommendations and alternatives for consideration by project staff, rather than using a more directive approach.

Technical Assistance Coordinators

The case reports suggest that the expertise of the TADS coordinators and their style and approach to their tasks influenced the outcome of technical assistance.

Expertise. Three characteristics of the technical assistance coordinators appeared to indicate their expertise: (a) coordination skills, (b) knowledge of resources, and (c) knowledge of the projects. Both case reports are rich in their descriptions of the amount of effort put into their tasks by the TADS coordinators.

Both Carol and Bob appeared to be very attentive to coordination tasks. They maintained close contact with the projects, responded punctually to tasks required to implement technical assistance, and were persistent in their efforts to schedule, conduct, and follow-up the technical assistance. In general, their efforts were perceived by the projects as being quite helpful. In some instances, with Project Early Start, however, this attentiveness was seen as a form of pressure to respond to TADS' needs rather than to the needs of the project.

Both coordinators spent considerable time and effort establishing and maintaining communication among the project, the providers of technical assistance, and TADS. Both Carol and Bob made specific efforts to introduce projects and technical assistance providers to one another, to acquaint each with the background of the other, to clarify the need of the project and relay that information to the provider. To the extent that project needs were accurately assessed, the efforts of the TADS coordinators set the stage for the technical assistance and delineated the expectations of both project staff and technical assistance provider.

Both Carol and Bob demonstrated their knowledge of resources during the ratification meetings to finalize technical assistance for the projects. Both knew experienced and expert consultants in the areas of need identified by the projects. There were also examples of the knowledge of printed resources which they sent to the projects as further needs emerged.

It would appear from these case reports that the knowledge the agency coordinator possesses about a project is important to the success of the technical assistance. Both TADS coordinators familiarized themselves with the plans the projects were to implement by studying the project proposals. In addition, Bob, the new coordinator for Project Co-Op, reviewed the first year's files before he began to work with the project in its second year, and talked with Jay Arbey about the project after Jay had completed the second-year needs assessment.

Although both coordinators were familiar with project plans, it was not as obvious that they understood the realities of on-site implementation. Carol made assumptions about the transfer of information from the project's first-year to second-year coordinator. It was evident in the comments of Harry Newman, the second-year coordinator, that Early Start was treated by TADS like a second-year project when in reality they were starting over as a first-year project. Since Early Start chose a self-assessment that year, no direct information was available from a needs assessor to assist Carol in understanding the project's actual status.

Coordination style. The manner in which the agency coordinators interact with the projects affects the technical assistance. Both TADS coordinators appeared to be responsive to the projects. They made it known that they were available for clarification of the technical assistance or for additional assistance. This factor was illustrated when Harry Newman called TADS for clarification of the needs assessment process and Perry gave the information immediately. Responsiveness was also evident in the scheduling of technical assistance on the basis of project staff preferences.

TADS technical assistance coordinators were also flexible. Both coordinators demonstrated this characteristic--Carol, in suggesting a two-week extension of the date for completing the parent guide, and Bob, in agreeing with Linda to delay the cost analysis consultation until more local work could be completed in examining project costs.

Technical Assistance Providers

Characteristics of the providers of technical assistance also seem to cluster in the categories of expertise and style or approach.

Expertise. One of the most frequently noted characteristics of the technical assistance providers which reflected their expertise was their experience in the content area of the technical assistance need. This experience allowed the consultants to interact with project staffs as peers and to provide specific, concrete illustrations and recommendations. For example, several consultants (e.g., Dave Kramer, Florence Green, Norm Linden, Marti Brown) had themselves been involved in HCEEP projects. They knew what was expected of HCEEP projects and were able to share their similar experiences in creating and establishing model demonstration programs. Previous experience also was used--particularly by Dave Kramer and Marti Brown--to establish a relationship with the project, to illustrate concepts during the consultation, and to provide new information in a real context.

There were numerous examples of the consulting skills of the technical assistance providers in the case study. Consultants were often described by project staff as good listeners. The consultants often asked questions to clarify the information they were receiving or providing. They provided encouragement to project staff to participate in the technical assistance and share their ideas and concerns. Finally, most consultants used gentle direction to guide the consultation and keep attention focused on the task.

Knowledge of TADS and of the technical assistance process appeared to enhance service. In Early Start, as part of his explanation of the consultation, Dave told Bill Roland about TADS and its role in project development. In later conversations with Harry, Dave was able to clarify needs statements contained in the Memorandum of Agreement and thereby establish clearer expectations for the consultation. The needs assessment for Co-Op was completed more quickly because Jay knew the process and the possibilities and limits of technical assistance.

Knowledge of the projects also appeared to help consultants meet project needs. Jay Arbey and Travis Morgan were very familiar with Project Co-Op, for example. This knowledge was used by Jay to tailor the needs assessment to the project and by Travis to tailor the content to be presented and to pick up where the prior consultant had stopped. Dave Kramer had received information about Early Start from Carol which enabled him to tailor his assistance to project needs and later to enter the project easily.

Consulting style. Two characteristics were evident in the consulting styles used by technical assistance providers in the case study: (a) interpersonal skills, and (b) flexibility.

Consultants' interpersonal skills seemed important to technical assistance in quite a few instances. There were several examples of consultants being positive and/or supportive in their interactions with project staff. Both Florence and Norm were positive in their comments regarding the quality and usefulness of Project Early Start's parent/infant activity guide and in their recommendations. Florence strongly encouraged the project to disseminate the guide to the field. During on-site consultations, Jay and Marti were described as being supportive of the project staff, who were complimentary of their efforts.

Empathy also appeared to be an important characteristic. Empathy refers to the ability to determine and consider, during technical assistance, a knowledge of the projects, the real way they functioned, and the needs and feelings of project staff. For example, Dave recognized and was very considerate of the administrative structure of Project Early Start. He sent copies of his report on continuation funding to both Harry Newman, project coordinator, and Bill Roland, project director and school superintendent. Dave appeared to understand Harry's administrative role and its limitations, and he worked with Harry on topics that could then be presented by Harry to Bill. Dave also made recommendations that would meet both the project's and Harry's needs and that would be feasible, given the limits on Harry's time. In Project Co-Op, Jay Arbey demonstrated empathy when he showed sensitivity to the feelings of project staff during the needs assessment. He asked staff members in individual meetings if he could report their comments to the group, then he asked again during the group meetings before he disclosed staff members' comments.

The positive attitude and enthusiasm exhibited by consultants toward projects and their staffs appeared to enhance establishment of positive interpersonal relationships. Of particular note in the case reports was the consultants' interest in the efforts the project staffs were undertaking. In Project Early Start, for example, Dave Kramer was eager to return for a second visit and at the conclusion of the second visit asked to receive continued progress reports from Harry. Florence asked Harry to send her a copy of the activity guide when it was completed. Hursel Conway expressed an interest in learning of Project Co-Op's decision about JDRP. All three consultants were positively received by the project staff members with whom they worked.

Flexibility was another characteristic of consultants which was appreciated by project staffs. Harry believed that Dave's flexibility had been a valuable contribution to the success of the consultation. Both Marti Brown and Travis Morgan changed their agendas when they arrived at the project site and examined the project's needs more closely. The subsequent technical assistance was therefore more relevant to the needs of the project at the time, and project staff were able to take advantage of the particular knowledge and skills of the consultant.

Summary

The major characteristics of the technical assistance agency, coordinators, and providers which appeared to influence the technical assistance process did not change a great deal from those identified in the first year of the study. Instead, the added focus on this question during the second year provided more detail. Specific characteristics of the design for technical assistance, for example, were identified. Specific coordinating and consulting skills were made more obvious. For studies of technical assistance, these results suggest that in-depth investigations of specific characteristics can help to identify component parts and determine which specific behaviors or attributes are critical, instrumental, and/or insignificant to the process.

Question 3: What Characteristics of the Technical Assistance Events Themselves Influence the Assistance?

Technical assistance events or services can be viewed as a series of activities leading to and including the actual encounter between the technical assistance provider and the client. For this analysis, the activities and characteristics of technical assistance events which influenced the process are divided into six categories: (a) initial contact/entry, (b) identification of needs, (c) design of the technical assistance, (d) preparation for the technical assistance, (e) the actual technical assistance event, and (f) follow-up.

Initial Contact/Entry

The initial contact with a client or entry into the client system can influence the remainder of interactions between the technical assistance agency and the client. It is, therefore, a critically important phase in the process. For the second year of this case study, two aspects of the initial contact appeared to be important.

Face-to-face contact. In Project Early Start, the TADS coordinator and project coordinator attempted but were unable to carry out a personal meeting. All of their interactions took place by phone and mail. This caused both Carol and Harry to feel that each lacked understanding of the other and the other's role. Harry thought there had not been an opportunity for in-depth communication regarding what was going on in the project; his perception of Carol as a stranger limited what he was willing to share. Carol, on the other hand, encouraged the use of technical assistance and was disappointed when Harry did not take advantage of her willingness to provide additional resources. These attitudes persisted throughout the year and seemed to lead to several misunderstandings which served to increase the distance between the two. On the other hand, Linda Voland and Bob Mitchell did not meet during Year Two, but the case report does not give any evidence that this presented a problem for either of them.

Orientation to TADS and its procedures. Knowing what to expect of technical assistance and how to use it appears to influence its success. The effect of orientation to technical assistance was particularly noticeable in Project Early Start. Harry stated it well:

> The needs assessment is the basis of most of the technical assistance a project receives. Our project needed a more thorough orientation to TADS and the needs assessment and this lack of knowledge adversely affected not only the needs assessment but the rest of the technical assistance received.

Here again, Project Co-Op provides a contrast. As Jay Arbey conducted the needs assessment, he was able to provide an informal orientation to TADS as he identified needs and described TADS' purposes and resources.

Identification of Needs

Obviously, the technical assistance needs that are identified have influence upon the process. During this second year, the importance of the need to the client seemed to influence the project staff's attitude and enthusiasm for work in an identified area. For example, the coordinator and staff of Project Early Start identified the development of a written policy for their advisory board as their third priority need, and technical assistance was designed and provided to meet this need. Yet, Harry's reaction was one of puzzlement at the emphasis on this topic during the technical assistance event. At the end of the year, he explained that the advisory board had been created to fulfill a federal requirement and was not a high priority for the project.

Design of Technical Assistance

Several factors seemed to influence the specific details or design of the technical assistance provided to the projects.

Project staff's attitude toward types of technical assistance. Project staff often are primary participants in designing the technical assistance they receive from TADS. The attitude of staff regarding on-site, off-site, or printed material assistance has, as a consequence, bearing on the type of technical assistance selected. For example, in Project Early Start, Helen and Jill wanted to receive feedback from staff persons of other HCEEP projects on the products they were preparing for dissemination. On the basis of Helen's evaluation of the previous year's technical assistance, they did not want on-site consultation. As a result, an external review and critique through the mail was selected as the type of technical assistance to meet the project's need.

Match of providers with clients. In both projects, consultants were selected on the basis of their success in acquiring continuation funds and the similarity of their projects to Projects Early Start and Co-Op. In both cases, the providers were able to establish a credible relationship with the projects and provide new information through examples from their own work.

Scheduling or timing of technical assistance. Several examples from the case study illustrate the influence of the timing of a technical assistance event. As provided by TADS, the technical assistance cycle (i.e. needs assessment to services) covers a one-year time span. Because of differences in funding start-up dates, the time span is actually nine months, from October (the start-up date for TADS) through June (the ending date for HCEEP projects). In Project Early Start, the self-administered needs assessment was scheduled somewhat late in the year (January); yet this was only shortly after new staff had begun to work. In retrospect, Harry believed the assessment had come too early, before staff had acquired experience, knowledge, and confidence. It also had resulted in setting unrealistic deadlines for other technical assistance such as developing the activity guide. As a result, Harry thought that in trying to meet TADS timelines he had to accomplish twelve months' work in six months. The staff of Project Co-Op also believed that technical assistance was compressed into too brief a time span (mid-February to mid-June). They thought, however, that an earlier needs assessment would have been helpful. This view is an interesting contrast to the same project's view in its first year, that the needs assessment had been too early.

TADS' knowledge of the client's situation. The circumstances at the project site have implications for the type of assistance required to meet the needs of the assisting agency and the client. The knowledge that an agency possesses about the client is, therefore, related to the agency's ability to select appropriate technical assistance activities. Carol, the TADS coordinator for Project Early Start, realized this at the end of the year. She stated that had she known the real situation at Project Early

Start, she would have recommended a delay in scheduling and perhaps an on-site rather than self-administered needs assessment.

Preparation for Technical Assistance

The cases in this study illustrated the importance of preparation for technical assistance by both the client and the provider.

Preparation by the client. Before Dave Kramer visited Project Early Start, Harry read Dave's manual on advisory boards. This made it easier for Dave to direct the consultation. However, when Dave returned, Harry stated there had not been an opportunity to discuss Dave's recommendations with Bill and he did not believe Bill had read Dave's report. As a result, little progress was made in plans for continuation funding during the time described in the case report.

Preparation by the technical assistance provider. TADS staff members Travis Morgan and Jay Arbey both believed their advance knowledge of the project, acquired from preparation and direct experience, was an advantage in their consultation. Jay particularly believed his advance knowledge would prevent some of the difficulties experienced in the project's first-year needs assessment. From the project's perspective, Harry thought Dave Kramer's preparation resulted in recommendations which were tailored to meet both the project's and Harry's needs.

The Technical Assistance Event

Several aspects of the technical assistance as it actually occurred seemed to have an influence on the process.

Client involvement. It is logical to assume that client involvement in technical assistance activities which affect the client project or its work is necessary to the success of technical assistance. Examples from the case study support this assumption. For the needs assessment at Project Early Start, substitute teachers were hired for the first day so the entire project staff could be involved in the needs assessment, but they were not hired for the second day. Harry thought he could have done a better job of summarizing needs if the entire staff had been present on the second day. In both projects, continuation funding as the subject of technical assistance was dependent on the administrators of the fiscal agency rather than of the project. In order for technical assistance tc be successful on this topic, representatives of the agency administration need to be involved, and were, in both cases.

Consultant participation in project activities. There were few examples of technical assistance providers becoming directly involved in project activities. One instance in Project Co-Op, however, illustrated the impact that such participation can have. During a discussion following Marti Brown's presentation at an advisory board meeting, it was discovered that there were state funds which might be used for continuation. Marti relayed this possibility to two school system administrators, Arthur Andrews and Jean Sellers, the next day. This was new information for both of them, and although the information might have emerged in any case, it appears that Marti's participation in the advisory board meeting prompted the exchange of information.

Provision of project-specific suggestions. It would appear from these cases that the benefit of new ideas or suggestions from an external consultant is enhanced if the ideas are specific and directly applicable to the project and the plans it is attempting to implement. For example, Harry found Florence Green's specific recommendations for the activity guide to be especially useful, but he found the recommendations of Norm Linden too general to be very helpful.

The case reports on both projects contain examples of specific recommendations, made by consultants, which were put into action and proved valuable to projects. In Co-Op, Terry Price's recommendations and formats for data summarization were found to work well. The advisory board was expanded and attempts were made to turn some project activities over to the school system on the specific recommendations of Marti Brown and Travis Morgan. In Early Start, public relations activities were undertaken and the school's governing board was informed of project activities on the recommendation of Dave Kramer.

Not all consultants' recommendations were followed. In Early Start, further public relations activities were cancelled due to time limitations. Because of school policies and procedures, many suggestions for continuation funding were not used. In this instance, the suggestions made by the consultant were specific but they did not coincide with the philosophy or realities of the agency.

Flexibility. There are several examples in the two cases of how flexibility in technical assistance allowed projects to meet needs more effectively. In Co-Op, Linda Voland suggested a change in agenda to permit the staff to learn more about the project Marti Brown had directed. The date of the consultation on cost analysis was changed to allow more time between it and the consultation on continuation funding. Travis Morgan altered his agenda when he began working with the project to provide a better transition from the information Marti Brown provided to the current needs of the project. On the other hand, Harry Newman, at Project Early Start, did not deviate from the procedures for conducting a needs assessment, and he reported that as a result he and the staff seemed to be accommodating the process rather than searching for their own needs.

Clarity of materials. It appears that clarity is an important concern when technical assistance is provided through a set of self-instructional materials. During the self-assessment, Harry and his staff at Project Early Start were unable to develop technical assistance objectives based on the information in the needs assessment manual. They were able to clear up the situation with a telephone call to TADS, but they believed more examples in the manual would have helped them avoid the problem.

Follow-Up

Another, final activity in the technical assistance process, follow-up, would seem to be a necessary addition to complete the list. There were examples of follow-up in both cases. TADS coordinators contacted the projects after services were provided and materials, reports, and recommendations had been received by the projects. There was, however, no information on how or whether projects used the information they received. Future studies of technical assistance would benefit from a more in-depth look at this activity to determine its influence on the success of technical assistance and its impact on future services.

Summary

The increased emphasis on question three regarding the actual technical assistance events during Year Two provided greater detail than was available from the first-year case reports. As a result, it became possible this year to define the sequence of actions which comprise a TADS technical assistance event or activity. The detail also provided indications of characteristics or events which may affect each stage in the process. This information should provide a basis for studies of the technical assistance process in comparison with other processes of organizational intervention and further guidance for more in-depth studies of the technical assistance process itself.

Question 4: What Are the Outcomes, Effects, and/or Impacts of Technical Assistance?

The three previous questions addressed characteristics, actions or factors which influenced the technical assistance process. This last question is somewhat different in that it focuses on the consequences or results of the characteristics and actions which together comprise the technical assistance. For this second year of the case study, the results appear to cluster in the same categories as those of the first year: (a) administration, (b) staff, (c) communication, (d) focus for activities, and (e) program operation.

Administration

Technical assistance appeared to result in two outcomes relative to administration: (a) administrative practices and (b) fiscal agency participation in the project.

Administrative practices. In assistance designed to enhance program development, such as that provided by TADS to HCEEP projects, the focus is on identifying and planning new and better ways to accomplish project objectives. For both projects in the case study, the End of Year Survey indicated that technical assistance helped to provide more structure for administrative activities. This was particularly true in areas such as documentation and record keeping.

Fiscal agency participation in the project. The support of the fiscal agency for a project is an important ingredient in the project's success. Support in the form of direct participation is particularly vital when fiscal agency action is necessary to the accomplishment of project goals. This circumstance existed for both projects in the case study. For Early Start, the school superintentendent, Bill Roland, was an active participant in the consultation on advisory boards and continuation funding, both areas in which his participation was necessary. At Project Co-Op, Eloise Jacobs, the school principal, Jean Sellers, a school administrative staff member, and Arthur Andrews, an assistant superintendent of schools, were involved in technical assistance activities, particularly those related to continuation funding in which they had active roles and responsibilities. In both projects, there were indications of follow-up activity by and/or with the fiscal agency administrators in the content area of the technical assistance.

Fiscal agency administrators' participation in technical assistance was not always viewed positively. Harry indicated some negative impacts of technical assistance in Project Early Start due to the amount of time the visits from external TADS-sponsored consultants had taken from Bill Roland's busy schedule.

Staff

There was evidence in the case reports that technical assistance affected staff roles and staff members' knowledge and attitude or morale.

Roles/responsibilities. In both projects, the roles and responsibilities of new staff members were somewhat unclear at the beginning of the year. For Project Co-Op, the needs assessment provided an opportunity to identify and clarify these uncertainties. As the entire project was reviewed, staff members became aware of the many activities the project was engaged in, and they volunteered to increase their own roles and responsibilities to insure the project's success. The same process had an opposite effect at Project Early Staff where almost all staff were new. At the end of the year, Harry indicated that the needs assessment was conducted too early with an inexperienced staff. Some uncertainty and ambiguity about staff roles and responsibilities resulted which required clarification later.

Knowledge/awareness/understanding. There are several indications that the staffs of both projects gained new knowledge as a result of technical assistance. In Project Early Start, Harry identified new ideas on funding and advisory board, new sources of funding, and a better understanding of the continuation funding process as the results of technical assistance. In Project Co-Op, members of the staff gained knowledge of the JDRP process, and Linda reported positive impacts of technical assistance in general in the area of increased staff awareness. Perhaps the most dramatic example was Linda's comment that she would not have known to ask for specific types of information regarding costs without the technical assistance she received from TADS. Another dramatic example was the news Marti Brown brought to Arthur Andrews and Jean Sellers regarding the possibility of state funds for continuation.

Attitude/morale. It is not surprising that assistance in developing a program produces effects on the attitudes and morale of those who are responsible for making the program work. In Project Early Start, Harry indicated that technical assistance, particularly the needs assessment, had both positive and negative impacts on the feelings of the staff. Where accomplishment and progress were obvious, confidence and morale were enhanced; where the reverse occurred, confidence declined.

Communication

As an interactive and participative process, technical assistance quite naturally affects communication. In several instances in these cases, technical assistance appeared to create or provide the impetus for discussions which were needed by the projects. In Project Co-Op, for example, the needs assessment was described as providing the first opportunity for the staff and director, many of whom were new, to discuss the entire scope of the project. In Project Early Start, Harry indicated that the discussions he had with consultants were quite valuable. They provided an opportunity to explore new ideas and review, analyze, and suggest strategies for implementing a search for continuation funding and developing a public relations program. The discussions which occurred during technical assistance were said to have led to further internal communication regarding the public relations program.

Focus for Activities

Providing a focus for program development, as an outcome of technical assistance, was evident in the conceptualization of ideas and actions and actual planning that took place during the technical assistance.

Conceptualization. Some examples from Project Co-Op suggest that technical assistance was helpful in conceptualizing or structuring both project thinking and activities. The consultation on JDRP resulted in the formulation of specific questions to be analyzed and answered in order to provide the rationale for continuing to seek JDRP approval. Ken stated that the JDRP consultation structured his thinking and activities as he reviewed the project's end-of-year data.

Development of plans. Since technical assistance is a brief and intermittent activity, it is a process that cannot assume responsibility for carrying out client activities. Instead, it often best serves its purpose by helping staff members clarify what they wish to do and develop plans of actions that they can carry out. Technical assistance was described in both Project Co-Op and Project Early Start as having resulted in the development of plans. At Project Early Start, plans were made for the development and use of the advisory board and for seeking continuation funding. At Project Co-Op, plans were developed for attaining continuation funding and providing project costs.

Program Operation

Although technical assistance cannot assume responsibility for program operation, it can have impact or influence what happens in a project. Evidence from the case study related to program operation illustrates the presence of previously initiated technical assistance activities, the initiation of new activities or procedures, and the development of specific items, in this instance products.

Continuation of previously initiated activities. One indication of the success of technical assistance is the extent to which it initiates plans and actions that are later carried out. In both projects, there was evidence of technical assistance which had occurred in the previous year. In Project Co-Op, for example, the director and staff began an in-depth exploration of the JDRP process, a desire and concern which surfaced during technical assistance in the first year. In its second year, Project Early Start was following the staff development plan which had been developed the previous year with assistance from TADS.

Not all technical assistance-initiated activities are continued. Some terminate because the work is completed; others seem to be terminated as a result of the technical assistance itself or because of unanticipated events at the project. In these two projects, the last of these reasons appeared to be most obvious. In Project Early Start, an assessment instrument developed by the first-year project staff was considered by the new staff in the second year to be inappropriate for the project. Public relations activities planned during technical assistance in the first year were dropped due to lack of time. In Project Co-Op, a planned action (i.e. having the school system assume financial responsibility for the infant program) was put aside for a while because it was not feasible at that time.

Initiation of new activities/procedures. There were several examples of technical assistance which resulted in new activities or procedures. Harry and Bill, of Project Early Start, indicated that public relations activities had been started and positive changes had occurred in the operation of the school's board of directors. Impacts of technical assistance were also noted in the development and use of the project's advisory board. In Project Co-Op, the project's advisory council was enlarged as a result of technical assistance. Several persons were identified as members of a task force on continuation funding--a recommendation made by Travis Morgan. In response to a recommendation made during technical assistance, Linda Voland was looking for ways to obtain school system support for the infant program during its third year.

Development of Products

As demonstration projects mature, they begin to plan for dissemination and demonstration activities by developing materials that may be shared with others. In Project Early Start, the staff developed a parent/infant activity guide. Critiques from TADS consultants were favorably received and were said to have contributed to and had impact on development of the guide.

Summary

Technical assistance in this second year of the case study appeared to be focused or concentrated more on specific areas, such as continuation funding, or specific activities, such as developing a product. As a result, the outcomes of the assistance were more concentrated than they had been in the first year.

Summary

In this, the second year of the case study, findings of the first year were reaffirmed and new findings emerged. In general, the major categories in which findings seemed to fall in Year One were reaffirmed. To understand the characteristics of clients as they relate to technical assistance, it seems necessary to know something about the client's program itself and the setting in which it operates, the administration of the program, and the staff. Portraits of technical assistance providers do not appear to be complete without descriptions of the providing agency, the persons within the agency who orchestrate the technical assistance process, and the persons who actually provide the technical assistance. This year, added detail regarding technical assistance services led to the specification of stages in the technical assistance process from initial contact and entry into the client system to follow-up or termination. Outcomes again were found in administration and staff, interactions among staff members, and program development.

The decision to emphasize different questions during each year of the study appears to have been a good one. Considerable detail was provided about client characteristics which affect the technical assistance process in the first year (see Behr et al., 1981). In this second year, additional detail was provided regarding the technical assistance providers and the technical assistance events themselves (Figure 1).

Concentration on outcomes or impacts in the third year of the case will, it is hoped, provide the detail in this area to permit a comprehensive and specific list of factors which influence the process of technical assistance.

CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS	PROVIDER CHARACTERISTICS		
Project and Personnel	TA Agency	Coordinators	Consultants
Overall Project Major disruptions Developmental status Autonomy	Design for TA Degree of structure Type of staff	Coordination skills Attention to tasks Establish and maintain communication among project, agency, and consultants Knowledge of resources Knowledge of project	Expertise Experience in the area of TA need Consulting skills Listening Clarifying Encouraging Gentle directing Knowledge of TA agency and process Knowledge of project
Administration Leadership changes Role/responsibility differentiation Awareness of needs	Approach to TA Responsive Supportive Non-directive	Coordination style Responsive Flexible	Consulting style Interpersonal skills Positive/supportive Empathic Attitude/enthusiasm toward project Flexibility
Staff Changes in staff composition Attitude toward TA			

Figure 1. Summary of the case study findings for Year Two. These are not generalizable results but, rather, tentative findings that should be subjected to future investigation to determine their validity.

TA EVENT CHARACTERISTICS	OUTCOMES/IMPACTS
Initial contact/entry Face-to-face contact Orientation to TADS and its procedures Identification of needs Importance to client Design of TA Client attitude toward type of TA Match of TA providers with clients Scheduling/timing of TA TADS' knowledge of client's situation Preparation for TA Preparation by client Preparation by provider Actual TA Client involvement Consultant's participation in project activities Provision of project-specific suggestions Flexibility Clarity of materials Follow-Up	Administration Administrative practices Fiscal agency participation in the project Staff Roles/responsibilities Knowledge/awareness/understanding Attitude/morale Communication Focus for activities Conceptualization Development of plans Program operation Continuation of previously initiated TA activities Initiation of new activities/procedures Development of products

Figure 1 (continued). Summary of the case study findings for Year 2.

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